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STATESMAN

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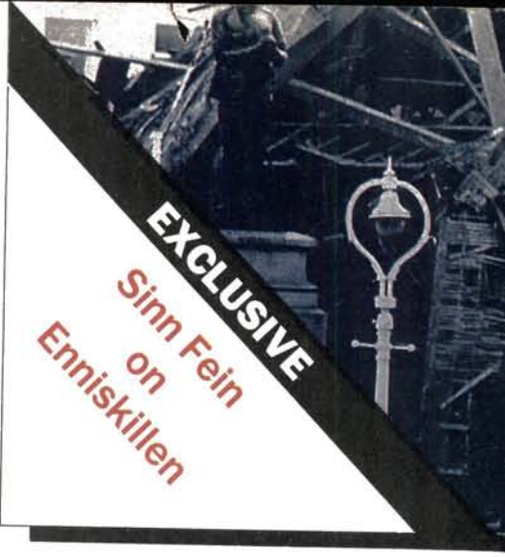

TAKE UP YOUR BED AND WALK!

The New Right operates on the welfare state

JOHN MINNION

Cover illustration: John Minnion

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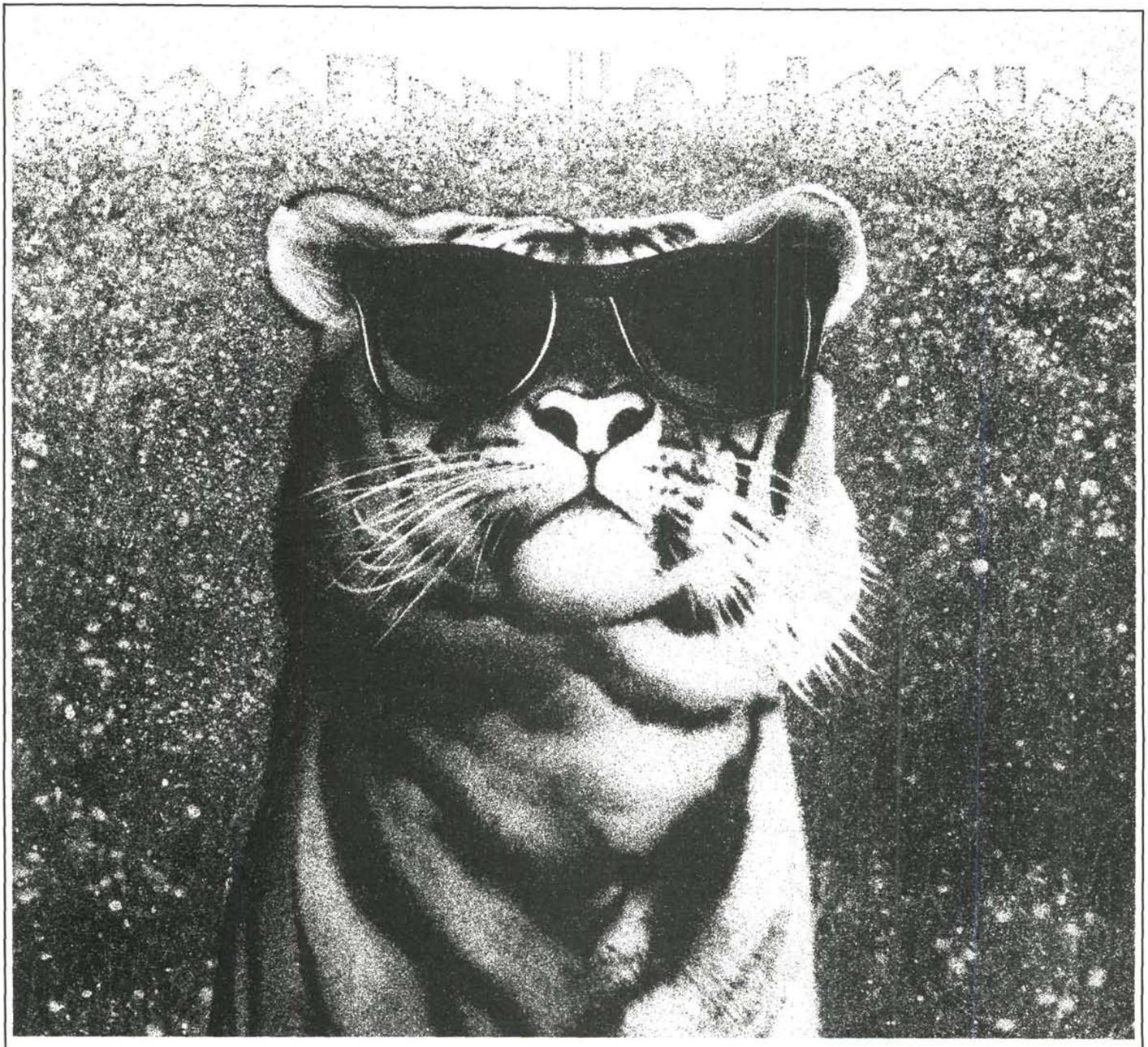

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NEW STATESMAN

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CONTENTS

FEATURES

Duncan Campbell: San Francisco Diary 4
Ben Pimlott: End of the three-party system 5
News 6
Edward Pearce: 'Send 'em back' Tories 7
Take up your bed and walk
Jolyon Jenkins: The New Right's health service wheezes 10; **Sarah Benton:** The strange Tory idea of dependency 21
Peter Hennessy: Reforming the Lords 13
Clive Ponting: Secrets reform — a better way of keeping people like me quiet 14
Joseph Collins: Aquino's land reform failure 15
Denis MacShane: Labour's lack of real concern about 'the meeja' 18
John Lloyd: talks exclusively to **Danny Morrison**, Sinn Fein's No 2, about Enniskillen, violence and lack of control in the IRA 19

ARTS

Liz Heron: Nuclear photography 23
Hugo Williams: Television 24
Stephanie Jordan: Postmodern dance 24
Judith Williamson: Cinema 25
Harriett Gilbert: Comment: Changes in copyright 25
John Spurling: Edwardian arts 26

BOOKS

Suzanne Cronje: Freedom fighters in South Africa 27
Stephen Howe: Kenya's struggles 27
Boyd Tonkin: The mis-use of art 29
Hilary Bichovsky: Paperbacks 30
Catherine Hall: Hobsbawm's *The Age of Empire* 30
Colin Greenland: Folk tales 31

BACKCHAT

Diana Eden: Infra dig 36
Robort Morgan: First person 36
Colin Spencer: Root cooking 37
Weekend crossword 37
Weekend competition 38
John Minnion: Take Me to Your Leader 39
Chess: George Botterill 39
This England 39

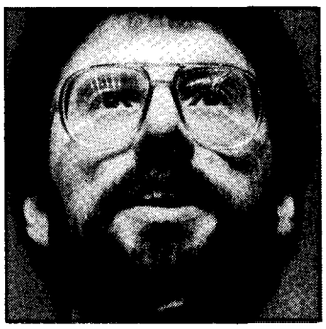
PLUS

Roger Woddis 4
Christian Clark 13
Letters: 32

NEXT WEEK

Christmas Books Special: including kids' books, music books, fiction, the ultimate truth about L. Ron Hubbard, crime, science fiction and a look at the best books of 1987

The missing link



WE HAVE been told often enough that Labour's policy review is to be a frank and searching affair. Nothing will be unscrutinised. Defence policy, held to be the most explosive matter, will be probed nonetheless. Economic policy will be revisited after the decade of profound silence following the promulgation of the Alternative Economic Strategy. The unions will have a sharp eye cast upon them. No untouchables here.

None? Well, perhaps just one. Labour's policy on Northern Ireland is not to be disturbed. Why? Is the form of party policy — unity, but by consent — so perfect that it is not thought right or wise to disturb it? Is the Hillsborough agreement — which legitimates Irish government surveillance of a range of Northern Irish issues, especially law and order and security — thought to have worked so well over the past two years that continuing bipartisan support can be unquestioningly extended?

No. The exemption of the Northern Ireland issue is shamefully due to a reluctance to open a can of worms: and the 11 deaths at Enniskillen, together with the torrents of piety which the Labour front bench has poured out over it, makes such a posture incredible. For Northern Ireland is, of all parts of the UK, the most in need of radical thought and radical action: what is more, Labour *can* do something about it: and in doing so, might even convince people, elsewhere in Britain, too, that in being serious about Northern Ireland it can be serious about much else.

The wholly understandable, but in the long run cruelly misleading, gush of sentiment which followed Enniskillen is surgically exposed by the comments of Danny Morrison, the second in command of Sinn Fein, interviewed by the *NS* this week (see p19). Morrison's regrets are, very largely, for the propaganda loss: for the extra difficulties he and his fellows will face in re-establishing support among people who are presently horrified by the carnage caused. As he clearly and frankly says, the use of terror — the armed struggle — will continue: and his calculation that the effect of Enniskillen will soon be forgotten is certain to be right. The solution to the Northern Ireland crisis lies far too deep for easy, or even hard, tears.

Labour has not addressed the crisis seriously since it lost power. A succession of shadow ministers have held talks with all sides, taken stock of party opinion — which is largely indifferent, and where it is not, largely pro-Republican — and hoped for a better job next time. The present shadow secretary of state for Northern Ireland is Kevin MacNamara, whose great virtue is that he is honest about his Irish nationalism. Debating with two Ulster unionists in Dublin earlier this month, MacNamara told them, to great applause, 'We want to get rid of you!' No question that he, if translated into the substance of a Secretary of State, would be active about promoting unity (with consent, of course!).

The largest pressure group in the Labour Party on this issue, the Labour Committee on Ireland, differs from MacNamara only in degree of vehemence and scruples over contacts. The LCI takes a strongly Troops Out position, and broadly subscribes to the same thesis as Sinn Fein — that Northern Ireland is one of the last colonies, that the British Army is an occupying force and that the Unionists are a reactionary settler class with whom history has caught up.

This view has held very largely unchallenged sway in the Labour Party's activist circles for a decade and a half: it has gained credibility as initiative after initiative, set in hand by Labour as well as by Tory governments, has foundered. Though the soft-left Labour Co-ordinating Committee has had a fit of Livingstone-bashing to make it feel virtuous about Enniskillen, it has never taken care to publish views on Northern Ireland significantly different from his.

It's time this changed: time that Labour does think through and take seriously its policy stance on the province. That will not be possible unless it examines the claims made by those in the province who argue that Labour — with the other main parties — should organise in Northern Ireland, and seek a mandate for government there as it does everywhere else in the UK.

Why is this argument so important, especially to the left? Because it speaks so centrally so the fundamental democratic rights of 1.5 million fellow citizens: to redressing a position in which they are governed by politicians from parties for which they cannot vote. In Labour's case, this general position is compounded by having some 70,000 trade unionists voluntarily pay the political levy to the Labour Party while being forbidden to join the party itself.

Until Labour does that, its leaders have no political grounds on which to challenge Livingstone: his frank republicanism obviously embarrasses their own more proper or hazy sort: but until they have the courage to open up the question of Northern Ireland within the party, and consider the constitutional and democratic claims of the people over which they aspire one day to have power, the review of policy will lack the most urgent question in British domestic politics.

John Lloyd

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DIARY

San Francisco

Americans, generally, seem to hold to an endearing notion that their government institutions are modelled on British ones, creating a myth, widely taught in high school, that Britain is the authentic motherland of the free. Magna Carta and all that, you understand. But this view misses the rather critical point that the US institutions that matter the most to liberty were born in *rebellion* against the English Crown — the Bill of Rights, the Constitution, and critically from this and other reporters' point of view, the First Amendment to the Constitution that protects the freedom of the press.

That's roughly why I am here. Earlier this week, the San Francisco-based Center for Investigative Reporting invited me to celebrate with them their ten years of pushing wider the boundaries of US muckraking journalism. (Muckraking, let it be understood, is a term of sincere approbation in these parts.) It's also 20 years since the first-ever Freedom of Information Act became law. On Monday, the Center publicly showed the two untransmitted programmes from the BBC *Secret Society* series, 'Zircon' and 'Cabinet'. The details of the events surrounding the Zircon affair in Britain earlier this year aroused genuine awe and horror among US journalists. Zircon also attracted considerable media interest and was the subject, early last week, of a tentatively scheduled major nationwide TV news report by the ABC network.

Then the (British) government swung into action. Last Thursday, a letter and phone calls to the *New Statesman*'s London solicitors threatened that if ABC Television were to show the banned Zircon programme in America, I would be jailed on my return to Britain. Quite how this was to happen, legally, wasn't entirely clear, given that the Zircon programme has been widely and legally shown in Britain, including by me to members of the House of Commons (although not yet on TV). What will the Brits do next, some colleagues wondered, take hostages at the *New Statesman*, to compel my satisfactory behaviour?

After the *Spycatcher* affair, Mrs Thatcher's reputation for arbitrary curbs on press reporting has attracted comparison with the deeds of General Pinochet. On this occasion, the British government action soon had a predictable effect — ABC's resolve to show Zircon became immutable, and the programme, now vitriolic and expounding at length about the lack of press freedom in Britain, was trailed for 24 hours before it was shown. For tens of millions of Americans, a few high-school myths may now have been dispelled.

○

San Francisco's most important scheduled political event for more than a decade took place this month. The first stage of the mayoral election was held two weeks ago; its conclusion, a run-off on 8 December, promises to return the city to the liberal democratic and community-based politics which died, literally and metaphorically, nine years ago. In November 1978, San Francisco's renowned openly gay supervisor (councillor) Harvey Milk was assassinated by a right-wing politician, Dan White. A few minutes later, White gunned down the mayor, George Moscone. Their deaths, followed shortly by the Jonestown tragedy in Guyana, in which black ex-San Franciscans were the main victims, traumatised the entire city. It was, in effect, the final episode of '60s San Francisco, which had led the world all the way from early hippiedom in Haight/Ashbury to the consolidation of women's, gay and environmental movements in the late 1970s.

Moscone is now commemorated by a huge conference centre downtown, Milk by a small plaza in the gay district of Castro. The outgoing mayor, Diane Feinstein, has been more in tune with business than community politics, and let both downtown office tower blocks and city house prices and rents hit the ceiling. After two terms, she must now leave office. The major competitors for her post are a California State Assemblyperson, Art Agnos, and John Molinari, a right-leaning Democrat and city supervisor who began his political life as a Republican. Agnos, now the heir apparent to San Francisco's crown, is widely respected as a decent, although non-radical, liberal. Molinari's campaign, in contrast, was distinguished by both smug complacency and smear tactics — known hereabouts as 'slime bucket' hurling. Molinari loudly asserted that he would win nearly 50 per cent, but got only a quarter of the poll. In fact, Agnos nearly swept into office on the very first showing with over 48 per cent of the poll (one vote over 50 per cent is the vital threshold). In the final runoff with Agnos, Molinari now has little chance, and some of his backers have urged him to throw in the towel before the December defeat. The better folk of San Francisco seem very happy with that prospect.

Another upcoming but unscheduled major event for San Francisco is arousing quiet fear; fear that is seldom vocalised or seen but is as omnipresent in the local psyche as the fear of Aids, or of nuclear-war. Sometimes, this fear comes to surface. Soon after I arrived here, I waited in an underground station, idly watching bystanders — when a woman standing opposite suddenly recast her face as a mask of horror. Her jaw dropped visibly, and it was some seconds before she recovered her composure. I wondered at first if someone behind me had just been murdered—or if someone was about to murder me—but the trigger for the sudden trauma suddenly got through to my brain too, broken up as it had been through the fuzzy crackling of the station tannoy system. 'Earthquake!' The trains were all being stopped for half an hour, the announcement continued. The tension all around was quite tangible, even if no one visibly reached for a crucifix or rosary beads. It turned out that the earthquake had already happened; the rapid transit system was just being checked for damage before the trains restarted. But had the last shudder just been the first tremor before the Big One?

○

And so to church. However, some of San Francisco's churches have evolved far from the Church of England model. Monday night's meeting at the Metropolitan Community Church on Eureka Street was somewhat secular — a Safe Sex Workshop, sponsored by the San Francisco Aids Foundation. The event was preceded by a slide show of such sexual explicitness that, had Mrs Whitehouse been in attendance, and told she had entered a church, she would have concluded that British Airways had dropped her off at the wrong planet. As the teach-in proceeded, we were invited to share our knowledge or experiences of safe-sex practice. So I shared with America the advice of a leading British exponent of this subject about the use of lemon curd. A Californian audience looked on admiringly and knowingly, inferring lemon curd to be an inspired British addition to sexual gymnastics, rather than to the larder cupboard. Perhaps, now, after the event, a nice Californian might enquire if I was free for some in-depth coaching in this esoteric foreign speciality.

And so, on to condom-unrolling practice. One had to proffer four fingers to one's partner for this rehearsal. Shy smiles were exchanged across the church hall. The San Franciscans were impressed when I commented that what we were doing had already been shown live on British television — twice. However, America has nearly caught up. The US Public Broadcasting Service has just aired an Aids and safe-sex special, with guest star Ronald Reagan Jr (dancer son of the well-known President). Ron Junior suggested to the show organiser that America follow the British example, using a banana as the obvious prop. This proposal apparently did not find favour with his father's appointees to the PBS Board. But Ron Junior was crustily intolerant. '**** it,' the President's son is reported to have said, 'I'm going with the banana.'

Duncan Campbell

ROGER WODDIS

Gardiner's Corner

George Gardiner, Tory MP for Reigate, told the Commons that every time he returned from South Africa he brought back a case of South African sherry and that this helped the workers there.

By George, he's got the right idea!
Bringing back sherry shows a kindly heart.
The blacks must go down on their knees
And bless his name before they're blown apart.

Sanctions are not the British way.
They'd only harm the people over there,
The teeming millions in their shacks,
For whom the whites most passionately care.

Botha is doing the decent thing.
It may be years before apartheid ends,
But meanwhile there are some of us
Proud to be fêted and among his friends.

The urgent task for chaps like George
Is cornering the market in concern,
And, more than sherry, bringing back
The case for slavery when they return.

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BEN PIMLOTT

The importance of Bill Rodgers' departure from the SDP

MORE THAN Roy Jenkins's loss of Hillhead, or even David Owen's messianism, the announcement that William Rodgers will be leaving politics to take what he calls a 'real job' marks a change of season. The seven-year assault on the two-party system is over, its achievement not a brand new party of the centre, but the grim domination of the right and a splintered and demoralised opposition. The SDP is dead: may it rest in peace. Yet what remains of the Alliance cannot be written off.

The departure of Rodgers has a more than symbolic importance, because he was the most serious and passionate of the Gang of Four, and in many ways the most formidable. The least known, least glamorous, least telegenic of the Gang, he was the most actively detested on the Labour left, which knew a true enemy. Possibly he was also the most principled: unlike Owen or Williams he ploughed a consistent furrow. A Gaitskellite from before the term had been invented, he learnt his political arts masterminding the Campaign for Democratic Socialism, which helped to turn the party away from unilateralism in 1960-1.

Thereafter he was a marked man, and his suspicion of anybody or anything connected with the left reflected a lifetime's mutual antipathy. Yet he was also the member of the Gang who was the fiercest party loyalist — first to Labour, which he felt others had betrayed, and then to the new creation. He became the Jesuit of the organisation: the man who knew the people, did the sums and made the arrangements. He also made his contribution to its ideology. Of the first three testaments written by SDP leaders, his is the most coherent, and the least pretentious. Like Williams and Jenkins, he is now furiously angry with Owen.

At first, as the only one of the Gang who neither won a by-election nor held his seat in 1983, Rodgers seemed the least important. Surrounded by prima donnas, he was happy with the backroom. Recently, however, the effective retirement of Jenkins and the mysterious behaviour of Owen pushed him forward, as a steadying influence: leading the disconsolate troops towards the Liberal merger. Now, it seems, he feels that there is little more that he can usefully do. The blow to what is left of the Alliance will be massive. Rodgers believes that if the merger comes off, the new party will retain much of the flavour of the SDP. Whatever the formal constitution, his own departure makes this much less likely. Apart from the increasingly preoccupied Shirley Williams, and a newly-elected party leader who has only to open his mouth to reduce an audience to mogadon torpor, the Social Democrat wing of the Alliance now has no national face.

YET THERE COULD be an after-life. The Alliance is currently trailing in the polls at half the level it achieved on polling day. But this probably represents a rock-bottom. If the merger goes through, and the Owenites dwindle, the new formation that coalesces around the wilier and more personable of the two Davids could rapidly become a powerful electoral force once again. If there is understandable pleasure to be had from the terminal writhings of the SDP, the left would do well to remember that it came within a whisker of being overhauled by the Alliance at the last election. The potential support is still there, and Labour shows no signs of capturing it. The SDP was founded partly because of voting studies that pointed to the existence of a large and growing section of the electorate that was disenchanted with and detached from the old parties, especially Labour. That has not changed. Recent evidence, indeed, seems to reinforce it, suggesting that, by the last election, the Alliance had begun to carve out a distinctive constituency of its own. Grandiose Alliance fantasies of replacing Labour as the Opposition can be set aside. But there remains no reason why, a year or two hence, a by-election should not lift the Liberal-based party off the floor and put it on course for a full recovery.

> ***Apart from Shirley Williams, and a newly-elected leader who has only to open his mouth to induce mogadon torpor, the SDP now has no national face***

Which brings us to the subject of realignment. Realignment is a word which does not appear in any respectable dictionary and is used with cheerful imprecision in politics to mean a variety of different things. Recently it has been applied to *rapprochement* between hard and soft left in the Labour Party, and also to the relationship between the Liberals and the SDP. Psephologists have used the term alongside the even more unspeakable 'dealignment' to mean a shift in votes. Perhaps borrowing this usage, the founders of the SDP used it to denote defection. 'We recognise that for those people who have given much of their lives to the Labour Party,' said the 1981 Limehouse Declaration, 'the choice that lies ahead will be deeply painful. But we believe that the need for a realignment of British politics must now be faced.' Since the election, there has been yet another meaning: the rearrangement of pieces on the political checker-board to make new patterns, and specifically, the lining up of Labour and the Alliance.

This was the theme of a gathering of polite (and mainly youngish) Liberals at Westminster Cathedral Hall last Saturday, organised by a body called Liberal Information Network (LINk). It was not representative, though several Alliance MPs and ex-MPs spoke, and 'several' represents a significant proportion of their total complement. Yet it was possible to form two clear impressions. First, there was a definite interest in the possibility of relating to Labour, a party which most Liberals dislike considerably less than they dislike Mrs Thatcher, but which they tend to regard as too centralist and insufficiently environmental. Second, there was a barely concealed animosity towards the SDP, characterised by delight at the Mosleyisation of the Doctor, upon whom they firmly pin responsibility for their recent electoral disappointment.

Liberals, of course, have much to gain and little to lose from an electoral arrangement with Labour. Equally, Labour has a significant amount to lose and nothing at present to gain. A time may come when Labour's continued impotence forces it into the kind of self-sacrifice a pact would entail, with agreements to stand down in some seats in order to give Liberals a free run, as the only means of depriving the Conservatives of their majority. But in 1992, at least, it may be taken for granted that there will be no pooling of votes by opposition parties.

Nevertheless (as I have already argued in the *NS*), Labour cannot afford to be fastidious in its non-electoral dealings with a party upon whose support, in the event of a hung parliament, it would be only too delighted to depend. An overall majority for Labout at the next election is not absolutely out of reach. But for it to happen will require an electoral revolution between now and 1992 without precedent since the Second World War, and of that — to put it mildly — there is not the beginning of a sign. Pragmatically, therefore, the joint interest of Labour and Liberals in depriving Mrs Thatcher of her control of the House should encourage, at the least, a minimum of courtesies on both sides between elections.

We are dealing with political climates. For Labour — wondering how best to spend the coming years of impotence — there should be three objectives: to co-ordinate resistance to the government, to persuade the Liberals to acknowledge their preference for a Kinnock premiership, and to ensure positive and stable Liberal support should a hung parliament be achieved. Each of these would bring a real political gain. The pursuit of none of them would involve compromise of principle or of policy. At the same time, the establishment of better relations with Labour would give the Liberals a clear-cut goal — the removal of Mrs Thatcher from office — in place of the uncertainty of last June.

Liberals, especially those of a greenish tinge, dislike being placed in the political 'centre'. They prefer to consider themselves more radical than Labour Party orthodoxy, which in many cases they are. The Liberals have different traditions and values from Labour, and any relationship needs to remain arms-length. But the gap in policy is not so wide as to preclude a dialogue about the shared desire to prevent the Conservatives from staying in power until the next century. No moment is perfect. But the effective re-birth of the pre-1981 Liberals, early in a parliament when opinions are still fluid, may provide the only chance. □

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Soft, new, longer and stronger lefts

Last Saturday was Prince Charles' birthday. It was also the occasion of an unusual number of left-wing gatherings. Our (republican) correspondents report.

1: The Soft Left

THE Labour Co-ordinating Committee revealed its increasingly hard-boiled centre last week when it delivered a stinging snub to those of its leading figures who have truck with the 'hard' left. Ken Livingstone and Mike Ward — unfairly seen as Ken's sidekick since he was deputy GLC leader — were kicked off the faction's executive, while Peter Hain — the original cuddly leftie — was returned with a sharply reduced vote in 17th place out of 20.

The 'soft'-left faction's annual general meeting on Saturday also took a stand on Ireland for the first time in its nine-year history, fairly decisively rejecting British withdrawal in the lifetime of a Labour parliament, as urged by Livingstone and Hain. This was defeated by 70 votes to 50 in a bad-tempered debate, and a motion favouring unity with the consent of the Northern Irish majority carried instead. Ken Livingstone stormed out of the meeting after being accused of having blood on his hands by his implied support for Sinn Fein.

So far has the Labour Co-ordinating Committee come from its origins as cheerleader for Tony Benn's 1981 deputy leadership campaign, that it defeated heavily the proposal that Roy Hattersley should be opposed as deputy leader of the party next year.

Instead, the meeting was addressed by two of the most intelligent speakers in the House of Commons, neither of whom is (yet) a candidate for the deputy leadership. Robin Cook was in bittingly good humour as he outlined the reasons to be cheerful after Thatcher's third election victory. The main one was that it was an electoral success, not a political success. 'Despite it, Mrs Thatcher has failed to win political and cultural hegemony,' he said. Socialism and individualism are not opposed to each other: 'That is both a false and a dangerous dichotomy. What attracted me to the Labour Party was not the values of collectivism but the values of individualism, of rebellion, of freedom, of liberation from the machinery of state secrecy. Mrs Thatcher has reduced individualism to the single definition that it is competition, that you become rivals with other members of the community.'

Chris Smith, on the other hand, will never be an orator, but the MP for Islington South is one of the fastest-rising stars of the parliamentary party. He came top of the poll for the LCC executive, and made a speech brimming with good ideas on Labour's weakest policy area, the economy.

John Rentoul

2: The New Left

'THERE'S AN auful lot o'forriners here,' rumbled a thick Fifeshire accent in the row behind me. Retired NUM general secretary Lawrence Daly — once one of the few prominent New Left trade unionists — was evidently puzzled, though gratified, at the fact. The British New Left of the 1950s was a loose alliance of ex-Communists, Labour Party Bevanites and independent libertarian socialists. It formed in reaction to Suez and the Hungarian invasion, centred around two journals, the Oxford-based *Universities and Left Review* and the dissident-Communist *New Reasoner*, later merged in *New Left Review*.

It persistently proclaimed its internationalism, but its trajectory was Anglocentric, its central concerns those of these islands then. Yet the initiative to commemorate and reappraise the New Left, 30 years on, came mostly from a group of Oxford graduate students, few of them British, the main organisers US citizens. The audience for 'Out of Apathy', last weekend's conference marking 30 years of New Leftism, was on first sight equally surprising. Most of the speakers and perhaps a quarter of the participants were veterans of 1956 and all that, another quarter second-generation New Leftists like current *New Left Review* editor Robin Blackburn, the remainder mostly under 30, mostly from overseas — Americans, Australians, Germans, Indians.

If that fact aroused depressing thoughts about the current state of British radicalism, few at the conference voiced them. The bulk of the speakers — who included Stuart Hall, Arnold Wesker, Raphael Samuel, Trevor Griffiths, Canadian philosopher Charles Taylor and novelist Mervyn Jones — were upbeat about their youthful activities. Samuel, quoting Mao on the French Revolution, said it was too soon to assess the impact of a movement whose offshoots were still growing. Only filmmaker Lindsay Anderson was anxious wholly to repudiate his political past, which he did in a striking display of rudeness and arrogance. Perhaps, though, those New Leftists now on the New Right had chosen to stay away.

Yet if most people still thought the New Left legacy a positive one, and though many noted that the late 1950s had seemed at the time as politically bleak as do the late 1980s, nearly all were also outspokenly revisionist. Partly this was a matter of noting some yawning gaps in the first New Left's politics: above all the politics of gender.

There was also a repeated stress on the present impasse and future uncertainty of the socialist idea itself. Charles Taylor put it most strongly, saying that we now no longer know what we mean by 'socialism' and that many of us are scared of trying to formulate an answer. Doing so would require as a minimum the abandonment of most of what we understand as Marxism. The general belief — though not everyone wanted to go so far as Taylor — seemed to be that the New Left had cleared the ground on which a new radicalism could be built, but that we have only the sketchiest plans for the building. The uncertainty should be at least as liberating as it is frightening.

Stephen Howe

3: The Liberal Left

DAVID STEEL and the radical Liberals grouped in LINk, the Liberal Information Network, agreed on one thing over the weekend: the future does not lie in electoral pacts. But while Steel's words were aimed at the go-it-alone SDP, the LINk conference had not a word for the SDP or indeed the planned merger. If that particular 'realignment' is mere code for takeover (like the old left 'calls for unity'), there is no realignment; if it isn't, it jeopardises the Liberals' bid to be England's leading radical party. Determined to be seen as part of the left (and exasperated by Ben Pimlott's description of them as a party of the centre) the LINk Liberals were looking to the Labour Party, the Greens and non-party associations.

A paper by Michael Steed, of Manchester University, seemed to settle the question of pacts. Or rather of whether either the Labour Party or the Alliance could satisfactorily destroy each other by the next election. No, he concluded; both had survived the party system. But pacts might work in particular circumstances; if there was a small swing against the Tories, some sort of pact or tactical voting in a few easily identified seats could 'make all the difference in the world'. This is where TV 87, the campaign for tactical voting, had gone wrong, with their 'screeds of seats, most of them irrelevant'. He didn't name names, but pointed to seats in the West Midlands and London.

This was good news to the conference as even left-wing Liberals regard the Labour Party with deep suspicion as a bunch of unregenerate 'productionists'. These are people who still believe that growth would solve social problems and that economics shapes all. No, argue Liberals, it's the political form of things that counts, and look to the politics of environmentalism and welfare, both based outside parties, to support their position. Their afternoon speakers were Jean Lambert of the Greens and Sheila McKechnie, director of Shelter, who impressed the conference with her criticism of the political limits of Whitehall lobbying. 'Realignment will have to come from ideas and not from structures, especially in parliament,' concluded Hannam Rose, editor of *Radical Quarterly*, LINk's year-old magazine. 'There is a growing view among pressure groups and trade unions that the Labour Party is not the only repository for action, there has to be a more plural view. The areas of co-operation will be green issues, libertarian issues, and breaking down power. This is a different agenda from the Labour Party's.' A will for a new political pluralism — or a bid for Liberal Party dominance?

Sarah Benton

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4: Eurocommunist Left

'IT'S VERY flat', grumbled Communists, doing their best at their party's 40th Congress, to lounge in the comfortless corridors of Hammersmith's town hall. This is where the politics of the Communist Party congresses usually take place as delegates gather to lobby the three committees which decide what will be debated and who will be elected to the national executive committee. This year the corridor chat and lobbying was as lacklustre as the debates.

The Stalinists have effectively been defeated (they mustered less than a fifth of the votes on their demand to welcome back the *Morning Star* and the expelled hard-liners) and no new political battle has been declared. While General Secretary Gordon McLennan moved carefully to enunciate his understanding of political pluralism and the CP's role within this, his national organiser Ian McKay, in the debate on 'renewing the party', still spoke of 'left unity' as though this were the same thing. It was not a debate that got to grips with the implications of genuinely pluralistic alliances outside parliament.

Like the Labour Party, talking about their internal life still excites more passion in Communists than issues of policy and strategy. Nothing has replaced the furious '70s debates over incomes policy, feminism and the nature of the state. But most of the Communists who pioneered those debates have either left the party or simply don't turn up to Congresses now. Few are left who are prepared publicly to pose the question that haunts them all: does the Communist Party still have a future? If so, doing what, and in what form?

There is no *perestroika* in the British Communist Party. It is changing in form, largely because the life has gone out of many of the organic groups (on industry, literature, theory, economics, women) that once fuelled the party with new ideas and recruits. For the last few years, *Marxism Today* — as much a party within a party as a magazine — has been the lone bearer of new energy. It has functioned with the leadership's blessing, but without being able to change the structure of the party, only throw up groups within it.

This has left the CP struggling with a form both pluralist and 'democratic centralist'. The format of Congress is still strictly the latter. The leadership still provides one immensely long resolution which is supposed to lay down the line on every issue of importance. Branches can then try to amend this. The booklets of amendments are impressively fat. Almost none gets declared (and fewer get read).

This makes focusing on a specific policy impossible. Thus, Saturday's debate on Europe had hardly begun to stutter its way over Hammersmith's faulty PA system before it was time for the next section of the Great Resolution.

The choice of fraternal delegates, from Ireland, Namibia, South Africa, Nicaragua, still echoes an international policy confined to support for colonial struggles. And the return of the Man from Tomsk, the First Secretary despatched from the USSR to bring tidings of *glasnost*, ends the CPGB's long and painful separation from the Soviet Communist Party. The platform's impassive Scottish glaze, pioneered by Mick McGahey and honed by Gordon McLennan, cracked in the warm embrace for the solemn Russian. When Jon Bloomfield called for the rehabilitation of Alexander Dubcek there wasn't a mutter of disapproval. That, too, was yesterday's battle.

Sarah Benton

Labour's Scottish leanings

Edinburgh

THERE ARE two ways of looking at Labour's 50 Scottish MPs. To themselves and the party faithful, they are the 'Fighting Fifty'. To the Scottish National Party and other political opponents, they are the 'Feeble Fifty'. Which characterisation approximates closer to reality?

The truth might become a little clearer this Saturday (21 November) when the Labour Party in Scotland holds an unprecedented 'special conference' in Edinburgh's Usher Hall. Its purpose is to assess campaigning priorities and strategies in the light of the party's post-election Scottish dilemma: the responsibility of protecting Scotland from Thatcherism without any real power to do so.

Perhaps the main significance of the day will be the signal that it sends to the party down south. Apart from the obvious campaigns (against the poll tax, electricity privatisation and in favour of jobs and a Scottish assembly), the conference is being asked to back measures aimed at enhancing the Scottish party's autonomy.

While the party leadership in London might feel the need to alter policies to appeal to a wider range of southern voters, there is no such imperative north of Gretna Green. The Scottish Labour Party won: hence its policy review could end up coming to rather different conclusions.

The long-term aim is to develop comprehensive policies for all the areas which would be covered by Labour's model Scottish assembly, the long-awaited legislation for which was published on Tuesday. Although the Bill, which gives an assembly the ability to lower or raise the rate of income tax, is unlikely ever to find a majority at Westminster, it is regarded as a major campaigning tool for the whole party.

Alongside the policy review, the executive statement proposes 'a major review of Scottish party finances'. The aim is to give the party control of its own resources in Scotland and to open new offices outside the central belt (probably in Dumfries and Inverness). As one executive member put it: 'Frankly, we do not want to be dragged down with the UK party.'

There is a strong desire to increase the Scottish party's input to decision-making and policy development at a UK level. Although not necessarily in the way recently advocated by the new MP for Motherwell North, John Reid. His vision of becoming a moderate Scottish missionary among the lost hard left tribes in London is unlikely to be warmly received.

Naturally the hope is that the UK party will be ready and willing to devolve some power to Scotland. According to the Scottish Party chairperson, Bill Speirs: 'with goodwill from all those involved, I am sure that in the near future we can ensure that the party in Scotland obtains the kind of organisational devolution that matches the political devolution we want the people of Scotland to have within the United Kingdom'. The clear implication is that, if greater autonomy for the Scottish party is not granted, there will be trouble.

Rob Edwards

If the caption fits

No 44

David Frost and Jeffrey Archer are auctioning a picture of the prime minister, while Michael Heseltine (left) looks on. We don't know why, but you can tell us. Or you can give us speech/thinks bubbles. Best entry wins a £10 book token. Entries to us by 30 November, please.

Winner: No 42

Diana: 'Don't keep bringing up that horrid old Henry the Eighth, Charles,' (*G. Moore, Burnley*). Prizeless honourable mentions to *G. M. Hayward, Edgware* for: Diana and Charles (simultaneously): 'But I thought *you* were staying at home!'; and to *Philip Natal, Caterham* for: Diana: 'A chap called Weir, apparently.'

the digger

THE NEW SATIRICAL MAGAZINE WITH THE INSIDE STORIES. 55p.

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An 'appalling vista' if Appeal succeeds

THERE ARE a number of other 'Irish cases' waiting in the wings on the result of the Birmingham Six Appeal, now about to enter its fourth week at the Old Bailey. Estimates of the number of convicted 'terrorists' who, if the Appeal succeeds, would feel doubly justified in asking for their case to be reviewed varies from eleven to as many as 45.

It is a prospect the Home Office views with dismay. According to Bob Woffinden (*Miscarriages of Justice*, Hodder & Stoughton 1987) the whole history of the Court of Appeal has been dogged by civil servants' fear of 'opening the floodgates'. This was demonstrated in January this year, when Douglas Hurd referred the case of the Birmingham Six — convicted in August 1975 — back to the Court of Appeal, but simultaneously declined to re-open two other cases, those of the Guildford & Woolwich supposed pub bombers (all four sentenced to life imprisonment in 1974, a month before the Birmingham pub bombs) and the Maguire family (all seven found guilty of possession of explosives in March 1976).

The Maguire family's convictions, which involved no confessions, rested on forensic evidence similar to that now being questioned in the Birmingham case — the use of the Griess test and ensuing TLC (Thin Layer Chromatography) test for nitroglycerine.

At the Birmingham Six Appeal, the prisoners' case, argued for days on end by Mr Michael Mansfield, has been two-pronged. It rests both on the innate unreliability of the tests and on the incompetence of the police scientist Dr Frank Skuse.

In the Maguire case, the tests had been carried out by an 18-year-old apprentice and all the evidence destroyed. Much the same is true in the Birmingham case, where vital documentation was either never made, or has since disappeared.

Judges have certainly been eloquently aware of the implications of acquittal. In his summing-up at the original trial, Mr (now Lord) Justice Bridge spoke of 'the scale of the conspiracy' among the police which the jury would have to believe. In January 1980 the police appealed against the men's writs for assault. In the civil division the Master of the Rolls, Lord Denning, allowed the appeal and described what would happen if the men won. It 'was such an appalling vista that every sensible person would say "It cannot be right that these actions should go any further."'

There is, however, a loophole available to the Appeal judges. According to the barrister Adrian Hardiman, writing in the *Irish Times*, the existence of a substantial doubt as to whether the statements were voluntary or not is sufficient to exclude them from evidence. It would seem open to the Court of Appeal to . . . *rule out the statements as evidence, without finding positively that the men were assaulted by the police.*' (my italics.) This is *Looking-Glass* land to anyone outside the profession; anything, though, however face-saving, might seem better than complete rejection to the six men who sit, still and silent, in the dock as their futures are mysteriously decided.

Corinna Adam

Alliance slumps, Labour rallies

LABOUR's heavy losses in local council by-elections since the general election have lessened, and its share of the vote has increased. The Alliance, and especially SDP, is performing unusually badly, its support being picked up by Labour and Conservatives equally.

The gains and losses table is as follows:

	Seats defended	Seats lost	Seats gained	Seats held now
Conservative	26	3	10	33
Labour	31	5	2	28
Liberal	9	5	5	9
SDP	2	2	—	0
Others	4	3	1	2

Fifty-four of these contests were three-cornered. In these wards 114,416 votes were cast:

Labour	42,128	36.8%
Conservative	46,150	40.3%
Liberal SDP	20,031	17.5%
Others	6,107	5.8%

In large part Labour's increased share of the vote is due to the 12 Scottish three-cornered contests in our sample which show that Labour's pre-eminence in Scotland continues after the election (it secured 46 per cent of the vote, compared with 29.3 per cent for the Conservatives and 12 per cent for the Alliance). However, in England & Wales, the Conservatives continue to feed off their third successive general election victory, securing 47.7 per cent of the vote, compared with 32.6 per cent for Labour and 18.1 per cent for the Alliance.

It is the Alliance which is currently in the doldrums. In October there were 12 three-cornered contests which were also three-cornered fights in the full May local elections this year. The table below shows the party share of votes in those seats for both months:

	October 1987 %	May 1987 %	± %
Labour	42.7	39.5	+3.2
Conservative	39.6	36.1	+3.5
Alliance	17.3	23.8	−6.5
Others	0.4	0.6	−0.2

The Alliance has lost over one-quarter of its support between May-October and this has shifted almost evenly to Labour and the Conservatives. Between the June election and the end of October in 1983 the Alliance had made net gains of 22 seats. In the same period this year they have sustained a net *loss* of three seats. ●

COUNCIL SCOREBOARD

23 July

Rhymney Valley WDC	Plaid Cymru hold

10 September

St Edmundsbury DC	Con hold

1 October

Tendring DC	LAB GAIN (Con)
Bexley LBC	CON GAIN (Lib)
Edinburgh SDC	Lab hold
Edinburgh SDC	Lab hold
Edinburgh SDC	Lab hold
Edinburgh SDC	Lab hold
Edinburgh SDC	Lab hold
Glasgow SDC	Lab hold
Lothian SRC	Lab hold
Strathclyde SRC	Lab hold
Strathclyde SRC	Lab hold
Strathclyde SRC	Lab hold
Strathclyde SRC	Lab hold
Strathclyde SRC	Lab hold
Thamesdown DC	Lab hold
Bexley LBC	Con hold
Bexley LBC	Con hold
Hammersmith & Fulham LBC	Con hold
Hillingdon LBC	Con hold
Humberside CC	Con hold
Lothian SRC	Con hold
Rushcliffe DC	Con hold
South Glamorgan WCC	Con hold

8 October

East Herts. DC	CON GAIN (Ind)
Kingston LBC	CON GAIN (Lib)
Tynedale DC	LIB GAIN (Lab)
Bradford MDC	Lab hold
Buckinghamshire CC	Lab hold
Hounslow LBC	Lab hold
Sunderland MDC	Lab hold
Congleton DC	Lib hold
Cornwall CC	Lib hold

15 October

NE Fife SDC	CON GAIN (Lib)
Fife SRC	SNP GAIN (Lab)
Kircaldy SDC	Lab hold
Hartlepool DC	Con hold
S. Bedfordshire DC	Con hold
Rochdale MDC	Lib hold

22 October

Bristol DC	CON GAIN (Lab)
West Sussex CC	LIB GAIN (Con)
Oxford CC	Lab hold
Rhymney Valley WDC	Lab hold
Sandwell MDC	Lab hold
Coventry MDC	Con hold
Lothian SRC	Con hold

29 October

Hackney LBC	LAB GAIN (Lib)
Derbyshire CC	CON GAIN (Lab)
Ribble Valley DC	CON GAIN (SDP)
Wokingham DC	CON GAIN (SDP)
Durham CC	LIB GAIN (Lab)
Basildon DC	Lab hold
East Kilbride SDC	Lab hold
Kent CC	Lab hold
West Lothian SDC	Lab hold
Broxbourne DC	Con hold
Devon CC	Con hold
Hertfordshire CC	Con hold
Kensington & Chelsea LBC	Con hold
Kensington & Chelsea LBC	Con hold
Lancashire CC	Con hold
North Yorkshire CC	Con hold
Hackney LBC	Lib hold
Scarborough DC	Ind hold

5 November

New Forest DC	CON GAIN (Lib)
Suffolk Coastal DC	CON GAIN (Ind)
South Cambs DC	Con hold

12 November

Borders SRC	LIB GAIN (Con)
Borders SRC	LIB GAIN (Ind)
Dumbarton SDC	Lab hold
Croydon LBC	Lab hold
Hampshire CC	Con hold
Newbury DC	Con hold
Stratford-on-Avon DC	Con hold

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Hungary for change

IN THE SOVIET UNION, *glasnost* depends on Gorbachev, but in eastern Europe, and especially Poland and Hungary, it will come from growing social pressures — *glasnost* from below instead of from above. That process receives an early test this weekend in Budapest where the law college of the university has organised an East-West dialogue 'from below' — not a summit for leaders, but discussions on how to bring societies together. The college is part of a growing network of clubs, circles and colleges which regularly discuss cultural, political and ecological issues.

The meeting involves a wide range of Hungarian participants, such as the Democratic Opposition (people like George Konrad and Miklos Haraszti), the Danube Circle (Hungarian Greens) and former members of the Dialogue movement (the independent peace movement). They will be talking with a similar mix of folk from Western Europe about 'Europe after Gorbachev' and the prospects for pan-European co-operation among social movements.

What's new about this project is that it takes place in the public domain and a host of official and semi-official academics and representatives of bodies like the Communist youth movement have been clamouring to attend.

But the authorities have begun to lean heavily on the organisers to cancel the meeting, and rooms booked weeks ago have suddenly and unaccountably become unavailable. Political tensions are increasing in Hungary. The country is said to be the showcase for experiments in socialism but the economy, still in a Soviet-style straitjacket, is worsening. Both inflation and unemployment are rising. In the countryside, anti-semitism and discrimination against gypsies is increasing, and in the towns, frustration about the lack of political reforms is growing.

A leading exponent of the reform tendency in ruling circles, Imre Posgay, is now said to be in trouble after giving a frankly radical interview to *Magyar Nemzet*, the best-known Hungarian newspaper. Rumour has it that he might now be removed from his position as leader of the People's Patriotic Front, an institution originally set up as an official umbrella for the activities of non-Marxist intellectual and religious groups willing to co-operate with the regime. Posgay has recently been trying to woo clubs and circles in the democratic network, but they have insisted on retaining their autonomy. The front does, however, incorporate semi-official bodies like the churches which belong to the reform tendency, and there are fears in government circles that the front could operate as a shadow political party.

The nervousness of the government is evident in the increasing visibility of military and paramilitary forces, as well as in statements from government leaders. Karly Grosz, the prime minister, gave an interview last week in which he said that the opposition is growing and — ominously — that the government 'knew their tricks' from 1956. The government has the means, he said, to deal with opponents, and not only political means. In Hungary, that means 'administrative means', a repressive crackdown in which people are harassed, interrogated and lose their livelihoods.

Stuart Weir

POLITICAL SKETCH

The Ever-descending Brow

Edward Pearce

A DEBATE which attemps to contain Diane Abbott and Tim Janman has its work cut out. Monday's second reading of the Immigration Bill attempted all this and more. Whether we got enlightenment or Chinese Opera is uncertain.

There are now two distinct cliques in the House on the topic of race. The obvious Labour one of the four black MPs huddled under the gallery on the far back row above the gangway in the company of Andrew Faulds, Jeremy Corbyn and others, in a state of alternating giggles and outrage. A more diffuse Tory group of such enlightenment figures as John Carlise, Eric Forth and Tim Janman smirks and assents itself.

I think we have all been watching politics long enough to recognise the fascination and indeed the utility which loathly opposites find in one another. The Home Secretary who dislikes racial prejudice but is obliged to put up a patchwork of rationalising inequities, is much less satisfying as he doggy-paddled through his script than than some succulent fellow who says in plain terms 'send them back'.

Mr Janman, who has the oddest of pacing styles, walking up and down three or four paces like a caged and rampant hamster, is your authentic send-them-home merchant. The German government had offered to reduce the immigrant population of Turks by half, from its present level of 4.5 million. Why couldn't we do the same? Unfortunately our boy lacks the Enoch Powell glittering eye. His nitroglycerine was served as soup. Various tedious articles were quoted from the *Daily Telegraph* across the years. By the time he was through with what Sir Iain Gilmour had said in 1975 and Philip Goodhart had thoughtfully amended in 1977 (both in the *Daily Telegraph*), the wedding guest would have heard the Mendelssohn, seen the knot tied at the altar, collared a chicken sandwich and a glass of champagne, kissed the bride and wrapped his piece of cake in tinfoil — Dear God did he witter on!

Ms Abbott was better and indeed Derek Foster the Chief Whip went ostentatiously to congratulate her. But Ms Abbott has a tendency to throb, which in the best of causes sees initial sympathy safely down the street to apathy in short order. Ms Abbott is sincere in her state of rage and indignation but it communicates nothing useful. Like D.H. Lawrence patting his solar plexus (a man of unsound views on this topic by the way), she feels it *here*.

With the government being devious, abolishing powers of appeal and talking about ending anomalies, official Labour was sanctimonious. 'Squalid' said Mr Hattersley, 'rotten', 'tawdry', 'a disgrace'. Not necessarily untrue, the adjectives were too symmetrically Hattersloid in their comfortable scorn for other less elevated consciences; they served the speaker far better than they will serve people at the losing end of the new legislation.

Actually, the best speeches came from Peter Shore, always good at morality because he doesn't moralise, and from John Cartwright who was wonderfully brisk, lucid and faultlessly liberal. 'No local authority can provide housing without the dependent family being there, and the dependent family can't come in without the provision of housing.' The pettiness (indeed the Un-Douglas Hurdness) of the Bill has to be dealt with coolly and factually if its injustices are to look like injustices and not grievances. Instructively, the gap between the government (never mind the repulsive young deporters) and even the Owenites perceptibly widened on Monday.

IT WASN'T a happy afternoon. A liberal Home Secretary, one of the most attractive members of the government, was obliged to put through a combination of points which were either minimalist — the new drive against polygamy — or against natural justice — the creation of an offence of Overstaying to erase a right of appeal — all of which looked like a *pro forma* attempt to 'do something about immigration' to please the private nigglings of I wonder who?

Yet there is no merit in using the word 'racist' like small change, flinging it by the handful at the head of a Home Secretary fully wired for civilisation. The squashily self-indulgent side of Labour of which Mr Hattersley is the gorgeously apparelled high priest, merely tells you what people like to tell the mirror in three-quarter profile. We didn't have a dialogue; we had a cantata. Diane Abbott talks about giving the police a license to harass immigrants, about the assumption that immigrants were a plague. For Mr Janman we were engaged in 'reducing the swamping of which the Prime Minister had so rightly spoken' (she had to take it back if I remember right). Camden had set an example in offering to repatriate the Irish: 'why were we so measly in our offers?'

The ugliness of the worst Tories was frankly disgusting, the absence of liberal Tories from the debate instructive. But nobody listening to either side would suppose that race is a complicated issue, horribly responsive to slogans and in desperate need of a many-sided, long-headed tolerance and a propensity to shut up.

We had, at best, a technician's argument gilded with rhetoric. Perhaps the one source of satisfaction is that Janman and the rest of them are such wretched, low-talent, no-account speakers. Enoch Powell knows there will be civil war, these people know nothing! Happily the unacceptable part of the present parliamentary party is unlikely to achieve more than a river running with much mud. Among estuarial Conservatives the Doctrine of the Ever-descending Brow appears to have set in. Tony Marlow, the prime rightist of the '79 intake, observed Terry Dicks in 1983 and remarked that it was nice to have someone who made him look like a pinko. Quite how Dicks is responding to Janman, advocate of castration when not drumming for deportation, one would like to know. As Willie Whitelaw would say 'It's all very unfortunate'. □

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Take up your bed and walk to market

JOLYON JENKINS *reports on the 'mean and muddled' policies that Social Services Secretary John Moore is close to imposing on the National Health Service. He predicts that Moore will shy away from tackling the vested interests of consultants, and that this provides the left with its opportunity. On p21, Sarah Benton's essay analyses the mean and muddled philosophy behind the New Right's assault on welfare rights*

THE CONSERVATIVE Party is painfully aware of how vulnerable it is on the National Health Service. Five years ago, the Central Policy Review Staff (the 'Think Tank') floated the idea of wholesale privatisation of the NHS. It proposed charging for visits to GPs and hospital stays, and introducing compulsory private insurance. The report fell into the hands of the *Economist* (the favourite receptacle for leaks from appalled Tory wets), and the subsequent furore, in which Mrs Thatcher made her famous 'safe in our hands' pledge, meant that the maps were summarily rolled up.

Instead of making a virtue of reduced public spending on health, ministers constantly reiterated that they were spending more on the NHS each year in real terms. The most radical initiative was Kenneth Clarke's attempt to 'cut' waiting lists by getting health authorities to ask those on the list if they were still alive, and, if so, did they still want the operation?

The policy of keeping the NHS at barge-pole's length has come to an end. In the last two years, there has been a flurry of pamphlets from the various right-wing institutes urging radical change; now, some of these ideas are getting a sympathetic reception at the DHSS. David Green, a research fellow with the Institute of Economic Affairs, who believes that the NHS should be reduced to a safety net and that the majority of health care should be private, has been invited to the Elephant and Castle (the Health Department's headquarters) to expound his views. 'There is once again a receptivity to new ideas,' he says.

One of the key figures in NHS policy formulation is David Willetts, director of studies at the right-wing Centre for Policy Studies, and formerly a policy adviser to Mrs Thatcher. (The gossip on the right is that she despatched Willetts to the CPS — which she helped found — to counter the influence of the troublesome Sir Alfred Sherman.) Willetts is probably the most inside of the outsiders. Last year he gave Mrs Thatcher a copy of a pamphlet published by the Office for Health Economics (a research body founded by the drugs industry) called *Health: the Politician's Dilemma*, which she read and in turn passed approvingly to the then health minister, Kenneth Clarke. Part of the dilemma which the author, George Teeling Smith, identified was that 'there are still those who hanker for the return to the principles of a universally free and comprehensive National Health Service'.

The rhetoric of the new health minister, John Moore, differs significantly from that of Clarke. Since 1983, the Conservatives have emphasised how much money they have spent on the NHS — how it has increased faster than the rate of inflation. Moore has not departed from the tradition, but in his speech to the Conservative Party conference last month he explicitly adopted the 'bottomless pit' theory of NHS spending. 'Even with new money, all the demands cannot be met,' he said. 'Expansion in one area may have to mean — at least temporarily — slower progress in another.' Increases in expenditure, he said, would have to take place 'against the background of this continuing, escalating, insatiable demand'. He also signalled a shift to preventive medicine. Whether this means more than photo-opportunities of John Moore on an exercise bicycle remains to be seen.

But it would be wrong to exaggerate the current influence of the radical right on Moore and Thatcher. David Green may not be *persona non grata* in the DHSS, but he admits that it still keeps him at arms length and discusses only 'longer term ideas'. And Moore reiterates the 'safe in our hands' theme so strongly and often that he has closed off any possible retreat. Meanwhile, the right now goes in for a degree of self-censorship, lobbying only for those ideas which seem politically feasible.

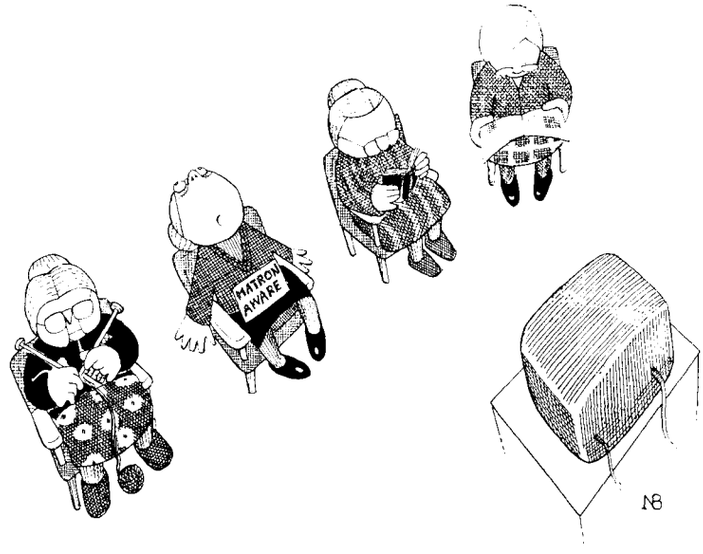
The parameters of the politically feasible are that any reform will have to keep 'socialised demand': patients can't be made individually subject to the market. The principle that they can refer themselves to doctors free of charge and receive free hospital treatment has to be retained (although it can probably be whittled away for things like family planning services).

Internal markets

The main idea now is to attack the supply side, by introducing 'internal markets' into the NHS. One plan which has received a lot of attention, and which is receiving serious ministerial study, is that of the American health economist and former Pentagon officer, Alain Enthoven. Enthoven suggests that each of the 200 NHS districts in England and Wales should become autonomous trading enterprises, selling their services to each other at whatever price the market could bear. So one district could specialise in hip replacement operations, another in renal dialysis, and so on.

This already happens to some extent. Rather strangely, GPs have the absolute right to refer patients to a consultant at any hospital in the country; equally, consultants have the right to refuse the patient. Knowledgeable doctors and patients, sometimes with the help of their MPs, look around to find the district with the shortest waiting list for the operation they need. The effects are uneven and arbitrary. Some districts have set up mutual aid arrangements with other districts to swap patients; others feel aggrieved at being asked to take other districts' patients and have levied charges, which may or may not be legal. Districts *are* compensated for 'cross-border flows', but two years in arrears, and at a rate determined centrally. There is no market mechanism and so, according to Enthoven, no incentive to increase efficiency.

Enthoven put forward his version of an internal



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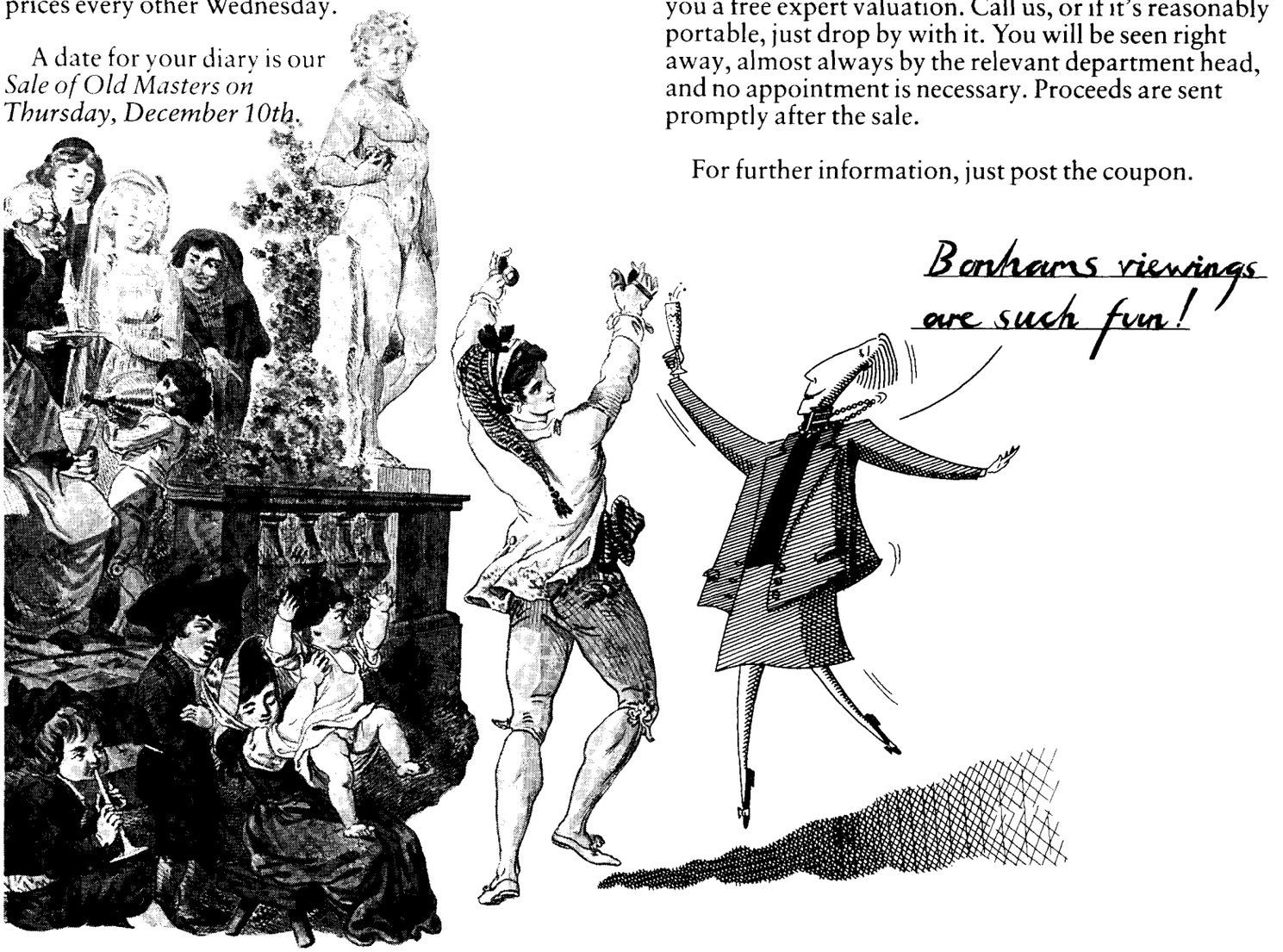

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market two years ago in a paper published by the Nuffield Provincial Hospitals Trust. He has found champions in his friend David Owen — who got the idea into the Alliance manifesto — and the *Economist*. Other reactions have been mixed. The London teaching hospitals like the scheme, because they feel that they have too many patients referred to them without sufficient compensation. But some British health experts resent the way Enthoven's paper, written after only a fairly brief stay in Britain, has received so much attention. (Nuffield is anxious to dispel the idea that it was simply 'the result of a quick glance during a flying visit.' Enthoven is well acquainted with Britain, they say — with no detectable trace of irony — 'having been a Rhodes Scholar'.)

The National Association of Health Authorities recently asked its members whether they liked the idea. They didn't much. According to the NAHA's director, Philip Hunt, 'anyone who thinks that internal markets are a panacea for resolving the funding problems of the NHS is being foolish. Our essential problems come from an overall lack of resources. The internal market will just shift money round between districts but not actually produce any more.' He's also concerned that health authorities would lose sight of their overall objective to serve the people of the district.

Critics also point out that 200 health authorities each trading with each other and despatching their patients around the country would produce expensive mountains of paperwork.

There is a further formidable technical problem. At the moment, many health authorities receive either too little or too much money to cater for the needs of their particular populations. A long-term process, known as RAWPing — after the Resource Allocation Working Party — aims to make the allocations more equitable, but if internal markets were introduced, you would have to move *straight* to the RAWP targets. That would mean that the richest districts would lose around a third of their money and the poorest would get an increase of about 70 per cent. The NHS couldn't cope with that sort of overnight change.

BEATING THE BLUES
5 December 1987

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Every patient has a price

The pamphlet that so impressed Mrs Thatcher and David Willetts mentions a second scheme, proposed by Alan Maynard, a health economist at York University. Under this, GPs would become the budget holders for the NHS. They would receive an allowance for each patient, based on his or her need, and would have to spend it wisely and frugally at the health authority of their choice. How each patient's 'need' would be assessed, and what would happen when the money ran out remains unclear. George Teeling Smith, the author of the pamphlet, is tetchy about such questions. Assessing the 'price' of a patient is no different in principle from a department store putting a price tag on a pair of shoes, he says.

The strongest objection to Maynard's plan is that it would encourage doctors to 'cream off' patients with cheap medical problems and ignore the hard cases. That has been the American experience with Health Maintenance Organisations, which are based on a similar idea. It's said that they put their offices at the top of long flights of stairs to discourage the disabled and unhealthy from registering.

Both plans seem most likely to founder on a political problem: the opposition of the doctors. With Enthoven's scheme, GPs would probably have to change from being independent contractors to becoming employees of the health districts. The spectre of a 'salaried service' has haunted the BMA since the NHS's inception. With Maynard's plan, doctors would be controlling huge sums of money, and might feel that the responsibility this placed on them would erode the other sacred cow of 'clinical freedom'.

This reluctance to take on the *real* vested interests in the NHS (as opposed to picking on the defenceless cleaners, caterers and porters) understandably exasperates the radical right. It also leads to half-baked government initiatives (which they presumably justify on the ground that a half-baked loaf is better than no loaf). One idea the DHSS has toyed with is to increase the proportion of a GP's pay which comes from the 'capitation allowance', so that they have an incentive to attract more patients. But since doctors operate restrictive practices (allowed by law) to prevent them competing with each other, it's hard to see how a doctor could obey the rules of the profession and still benefit from the new incentives.

Similarly, the difficulties with internal markets have until now guided the government to a kind of half-way house, where districts are encouraged to 'co-operate' (i.e. trade) with the private health sector, if not with each other. The private sector is terrifically keen on this, because it has too many empty beds — the result of an over-optimistic expansion earlier in the decade. BUPA last month published a fat catalogue of private health services around the country, to be sent to all district health managers. John Moore wrote an approving foreword, and according to BUPA's press officer, Philip Codd, it was the DHSS's idea in the first place. Codd happily plugs the fiction about 'co-operation': it's such a shame that the NHS finds itself short of the readies, but BUPA is happy to lend a hand to a chap in trouble.

The reality is that there are some bargains to be had in the private sector, and, in the short term,

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district managers would be silly not to take advantage of them. But using the NHS to shore up the private sector is foolish as a *strategy*. Enthoven sees the problems quite clearly. The private sector removes many of the best educated and most articulate patients from the NHS: 'Hence their "voice" within the NHS is attenuated. The private sector serves as an "escape valve" for pressures to change.' Equally he sees, as the government won't, the scandal of allowing consultants to have an interest in *lengthening* waiting lists so that patients join their private lists instead.

Labour's big chance

It's these governmental blind spots that could provide the opportunity for Labour to upstage the Tories. Naturally, Labour should continue to press for more resources, and to highlight the abuses of private practice, but that shouldn't be the end of the campaigning. There are gross inequalities and inefficiencies in the NHS which there is no socialist virtue in defending, and which a well-regulated internal market could go some way to eliminating. In *Why Are We Waiting*, published earlier this year (OUP), John Yates, a health service administrator, shows that there are some districts where orthopaedic surgeons treat 200 cases a year, and others where they treat more than 1,000. Similarly, there are districts which keep only 10 per cent of their gynaecology beds empty, and others in which the figure is 50 per cent.

Gwyn Bevan, senior lecturer in health economics at St Thomas's hospital, points out that GPs' referral rates to hospitals vary enormously around the country, even taking into account the age and health structures of the population. He argues that 'the important thing is to equalise admission rates. All the evidence shows that once a person has passed the hospital threshold, variation in length of stay and costs for the same type of care is very small. I would argue that all the emphasis there has been about what goes on in hospitals is misplaced.' He would like to devise a model which regulates GPs' referrals but which doesn't mean actually giving them the control of health service budgets.

The Conservatives still haven't sorted out their ideas on internal health service economics. When they do come up with proposals, they are likely to be both mean and muddled. With a bit of clear thinking and hard reading, Labour should be able to formulate its own policy for increasing efficiency first. The internal market, sensibly and fairly implemented, should be part that policy. □

PERMANENT GOVERNMENT

Meritorious aged ride again

Peter Hennessy

GIVEN THE RICH mix of its existing ingredients, it would be cruelty amounting to gluttony to suggest another addition to Labour's policy rethink. Yet, if the party is serious about governing in the future, it really must decide what it's going to do about the House of Lords which is enjoying a revival unthinkable when Labour was last in office and Lord Hailsham, with justification, said the Upper House was 'arguably less persuasive than a powerful leading article in *The Times*, or even a good edition of *Panorama*'. The position is very different today, not merely because of the condition of *The Times*.

The Lords matters to Labour. Thirty years ago, in a Fabian pamphlet arguing that the Privy Council should replace the House of Lords, Tony Benn said, 'The case for a second chamber rests on the fact that the Commons alone simply could not cope with all the work now done by the Lords. This would be particularly important when there is a really heavy legislative programme. Paradoxically, therefore, a Labour government needs a second chamber more than does a Conservative government.' Nowadays, as an out-and-out abolitionist, Mr Benn, whatever the merits of his stance, is right to point out, as he did in an interview for BBC Radio 4's *Analysis*, that 'the Conservatives have always got a majority in both Houses; we only ever are allowed to win a majority in one House . . . We have a four-year parliament for Labour governments because that delay of 13 months is a veto when you get to the end of a parliament.'

Labour has been toing and froing on the future of the Lords for 80 years since Sidney Webb in an early Fabian pamphlet warned that 'There must be no "faked" second chamber loading the dice against democracy. Nor do we want a sanctuary for the superannuated, an assembly of ex's, a gilded sepulchre for the meritorious aged.' (They don't write Fabian pamphlets like that anymore.) Typically, only the ever-practical Attlee government did anything about it reducing the Lords' delaying power from two years to one. Wilson tried but Dick Crossman's plan for a two-tier Lords with voting rights stripped from the blue bloods and the power to delay brought down to six months was wrecked in the Commons.

Crossman's diary entry for 23 February 1969 explains why successive Labour leaderships have shied away from Lords reform ever since:

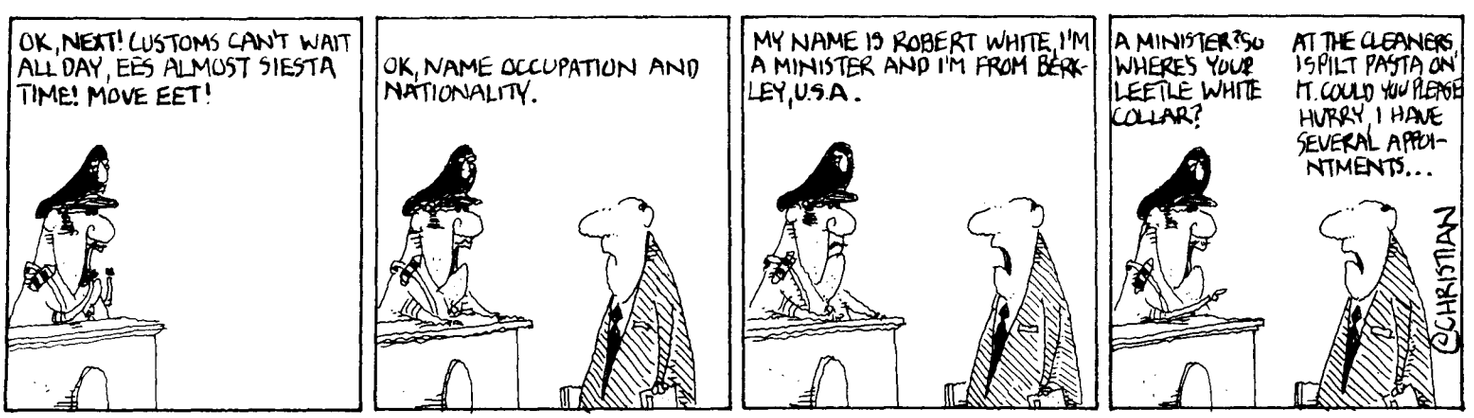
> I went across to the House at 7 o'clock. No progress had been made on the Parliament Bill, we were struggling with Clause 2 and there, as we sat on the front bench, we realised the utter futility of the filibuster that is now going on. Michael Foot on the one side, in his most brilliant, demagogic, amusing form, and Enoch Powell on the other, in his most brilliant, historical form.

To be fair, Labour's manifesto for the 1983 general election *did* contain an unambiguous pledge to abolish the Lords but there was very little that encyclopaedic document *didn't* embrace when it came to cherished causes of the left.

This time, only the persistent would have discovered what the policy was. The 1987 manifesto was devoid of clues. But the candidate who made inquiries at Walworth Road would have discovered an insipid formula along the lines that Labour recognised the value of the Lords as part of the legislative process but did not countenance the possibility of its frustrating the wishes of the Commons and would legislate to curb its delaying power if it did so. This may be a convenient form of words but it does not amount to a policy.

The Lords in their new televised and self-confident mood have defeated the Conservatives over a hundred times since Mrs Thatcher came to power in 1979. They are most unlikely to subside into torpor with Labour ministers in the Cabinet Room. Labour's Leader in the Upper House, Lord Cledwyn, recognises matters cannot go on as they as they are. He believes in a second chamber with a genuine revising function but argues that something must be done about the hereditary element. Lord Cledwyn says it's time a high-powered commission looked at the future of the place — the first since Lord Bryce's inquiry in 1917. It would be timely, and it might be fruitful, if Labour's Leader in the Lower House backed his colleague in the Upper. □

Peter Hennessy is a Visiting Fellow at the Policy Studies Institute and presented 'The Other Opposition' for Analysis *on BBC Radio 4 earlier this month. This is the last Permanent Government column: Peter Hennessy will begin a weekly column in the* Independent *shortly.*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MY NAME IS ROBERT WHITE, I'M A MINISTER AND I'M FROM BERKLEY, U.S.A.
A MINISTER? SO WHERE'S YOUR LEETLE WHITE COLLAR?
AT THE CLEANERS, I SPILT PASTA ON IT. COULD YOU PLEASE HURRY, I HAVE SEVERAL APPOINTMENTS...
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'Reform' means making things even worse

CLIVE PONTING *reports on the government's plans to tighten the secrecy laws*

THE GOOD NEWS is that Section 2 of the Official Secrets Act is going to be scrapped. The bad news is that the government is going to try and make things even worse. Over the next year basic rights such as the freedom of the press and the ability of ordinary citizens to know what the government is doing in their names will be at stake. If there is to be an effective campaign against the government proposals we need to be clear what is wrong with the current situation, why the government's ideas are unacceptable and what should replace them.

There is almost universal agreement that Section 2 is indefensible. It covers every single piece of paper in every government department from the most sensitive defence and diplomatic secrets to the most mundane. As one head of MI5 put it 'It's an official secret if it's in an official file'. To those outide Whitehall the saving grace of Section 2 is that it is so discredited that it is no longer enforceable: juries simply will not convict. In the last 20 years in every case involving a disclosure in the public interest that has been put to a jury none of the defendants has been sent to jail. After my own acquittal in 1985 it was clear that Whitehall too realised that they had reached the end of the road with the decision not to prosecute Cathy Massiter for her disclosures about the illegal activities of MI5.

The subtler bureaucratic minds in Whitehall have long realised that the campign for Freedom of Information has made so much headway simply because of the ludicrous nature of Section 2. They too advocate a 'reform' of the section. This is not however a last-minute conversion to the cause of openness in government. What they want is a new Act that will be enforceable, ensure that people who are charged with an offence are convicted, and that just as much, if not more information, is kept away from the prying eyes of the public. It is important to be absolutely clear that Whitehall has no concept of being accountable to the public. For it government is a private affair conducted by senior mandarins and handful of ministers.

The last attempt

Exactly what was meant in Whitehall by 'reform' was shown in the government's last attempt to replace Section 2 in 1979 with legislation interestingly entitled 'The Protection of Official Information Bill'. This accepted the Franks Committee proposal that only information graded 'Secret' or higher should be protected by the criminal law. But the government would still have been able to sack any civil servant who leaked low-grade information. The Bill showed its illiberal colours in its other provisions. Whole new classes of information, such as that from the nationalised industries, were to be covered by official secrecy. Most important of all was the way in which trials under the new Bill were to be conducted. A minister was to be allowed to issue a certificate stating that the leak of information had been 'prejudicial to the national interest' and therefore under the terms of the Act a criminal offence. Such a certificate would have been unchallengeable by the court and equivalent to a conviction. In effect a minister would have been able to declare a person guilty. The 1979 Bill also went further. Under its provisions the mere mention of the existence of MI5, MI6 or telephone tapping would have been illegal and it would also have been a criminal offence to repeat information that was already publicly available.

The Bill met a howl of protest from even the Tory papers in Fleet Street and when it became clear that the book exposing Anthony Blunt as a Russian spy could not have been published under the new Bill the government was forced to retreat and drop the proposals. Offical secrecy is now back on the political agenda for two reasons. First, the *Spycatcher* affair has shown up what Whitehall would regard as the weaknesses of the current legislation — it has not been able to stop the allegations made by Wright getting into the media at least in a garbled form. Second, the Tory backbencher Richard Shepherd has top place in the queue for private members' legislation with his own Bill to reform Section 2. While hardly ideal his proposals do restrict the scope of official secrecy and most important provide a public interest defence for the release of information.

> ***'The UK is already the most secretive country this side of the Iron Curtain but any government Bill will make things worse. Freedom of information is only a strange concept in the UK. Virtually every other western democracy has this right'***

A Cabinet committee chaired by Mrs Thatcher (she clearly does not trust the vaguely liberal instincts of Douglas Hurd) is now drafting a White Paper which will be followed by legislation sometime in 1988. Thatcher's own attitude to offical secrecy has been clear for a decade. As Leader of the Opposition, she visited the United States and was asked whether the UK had anything to learn from the greater openness of American society and government. She made the remarkable reply:

> Nothing at all; our system is much more open than the American one. The Official Secrets Act should be reformed but only to make some of its provisions against the unauthorised disclosure of official information stronger, not weaker.

Last week she also made a Freudian slip in the Commons when she admitted that her new Bill would be 'more restrictive' than Section 2.

The government's proposals will contain soothing references to 'reforming' the Official Secrets Act but will be as illiberal as the 1979 Bill. There is also likely to be a provision to deal with any future Peter Wrights. This is likely to make it an offence for a civil servant to publish any information based on his official experience without permission. It will also make it an offence for the media to publish such information without approval having been given. The UK is already the most secretive country this side of the Iron Curtain but any government Bill will worsen the existing situation and be a fundamental attack on the rights of the press and the ability of the citizen to engage in political debate in an informed democracy. The government is even more determined and autocratic than it was in 1979. It is doubtful whether it will on this occasion give in to pressure from the Lords. If there is to be any hope of stopping the government there needs to be a clear alternative presented.

Some things *are* secret

This alternative needs to be based on two principles. First, that there are certain secrets that have to be kept. The campaign for Freedom of Information recognises this and specifically allows for the protection of important information particularly in the defence and diplomatic fields. But this restriction has to be rigorously defined. Unless this is done 'defence' and 'security' will be defined so widely that little escapes. A prime example here is civilian high technology, particularly in computers, almost any of which could theoretically have a military application. The government also cannot be allowed to have the final say over what constitutes national security. In any trial the court must be able to examine the claims of national security and the defendant to argue that the public interest required the disclosure.

The second principle is Freedom of Information. This is only a strange concept in the UK. Virtually every other Western democracy has this right, including countries that have a political system similar to our own such as Canada, Australia and New Zealand. It provides for the citizen to see information unless the government can show good reason why it should be kept secret. This right is not about seeing high-level bureaucratic policy-making inside Whitehall. It is about activities that directly affect the citizen. The right to know about the safety of drugs that the government licenses, the safety of additives the government allows in food or the nature of the dangerous chemicals stored at the local factory. All of this is currently kept secret but ought to be available to the public.

The battle to reduce the extent of official secrecy in this country will be difficult. If the government's proposals are to be defeated then the opposition to them has to be clear that there is a workable alternative that would protect freedom rather than attack it. □

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Aquino's broken promises

JOSEPH COLLINS *reports on the makings of a revolution in the Philippines*

'BROKEN PROMISES in the Land of Promise' was the title Corazon Cojuanco Aquino chose for one of only two policy speeches she made during her presidential campaign against Ferdinand Marcos. In the speech she pledged that first on her list of social-policy priorities was an 'equitable sharing of the ownership and benefits of land'. Recognising the strength of landowner opposition to a redistribution, she announced that she would make an example of her family's own Hacienda Luisita, perhaps the country's largest sugar cane plantation.

Almost two years later, Aquino has utterly failed to keep her promise of land reform, despite having had an unrepeatable opportunity to do so. Not only was she swept into office with a mandate for serious change — one public opinion survey revealed that 63 per cent of Filipinos strongly favoured land reform — but she enjoyed a national and international stature bordering on sainthood, which gave her unparalleled moral leverage. Moreover, for the 17 months before a Congress was elected, she possessed full lawmaking powers, something other presidents only dream about.

Agrarian reform is urgently needed in the Philippines. In a country where more than 70 per cent of the population is rural, no fewer than seven out of ten Filipinos who depend on farming for their livelihood do not own the land they cultivate. About a third of these landless peasants are tenant farmers. Forced to pay high cash rents or turn over as much as two-thirds of their crops to absentee landlords, they are locked into poverty. Often even worse off are the landless who are farm workers, paid less than the scandalously low minimum wage. Many sugar cane plantation workers are unemployed for months every year, often working without pay in planting and weeding stages so as to have the 'privilege' of being hired at harvest time.

Despite a 5 per cent annual growth in agricultural production during the Marcos years, the proportion of rural families living in poverty rose from 48 per cent in 1971 to 55 per cent in 1975, and to 63 per cent in 1985. Even the World Bank, a longtime believer in the trickle-down effect of overall growth, conceded in a recent confidential report on land reform in the Philippines that 'investments and projects intended to increase agricultural productivity have brought few benefits to those not owning land — the landless labourers and tenants'.

The tightly concentrated ownership of farmland, by depriving the majority of cultivators of both the motivation and the means to improve farm productivity, has held down Philippine crop yields to among the lowest in Asia. Although high-yield 'miracle' rice was first developed in the Philippines, the average output on its largely tenanted rice farms is less than half the figure attained in Japan, Taiwan, South Korea, North Korea and China — countries in which sweeping land reform did away with tenant farming. And, although the plantation owners, or *hacenderos*, tout 'economies of scale', Philippine sugar cane plantations produce on average only about half as much cane per acre as the small (two and a half to five acres) owner-operated sugar cane farms of Taiwan.

A political imperative

Land reform is politically imperative. As Representative Stephen Solarz, Aquino's most ardent backer in the US Congress, says, 'The Philippines will see either agrarian reform or agrarian revolution.' It is the sons and daughters of tenant farmers and landless farm workers who have swollen the ranks of the New People's Army to a force of 30,000 full- and part-time guerrillas, active in 63 of the country's 73 provinces, and it is the rural poor who provide the NPA with its base of logistical support. The NPA itself promises 'a genuine land reform that will liberate the peasants from feudal and semifeudal exploitation' and already has fostered minimal land reform in areas where it has substantial control.

Visiting some of these NPA reform areas recently, I found that peasant negotiations with landowners had lowered rents and raised wages — ironically, often to the levels set but never enforced by the government. Only when the owners are judged despotic are their lands seized and redistributed. (Such owners, I was told, include those who repeatedly refuse to negotiate with their tenants and workers, those who grab land violently and especially those who call in goon squads or the military.) Land abandoned by owners, whether from fear or bankruptcy, is put into production. Moneylenders' interest rates are lowered by the NPA from 100 per cent or more every three months to 30 or 50 per cent every six months. Simple exchanges of labour and somtimes co-operatives are encouraged among the peasants, and the NPA often taxes the

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beneficiaries of minimum land reform a percentage of the gains that result from it.

During her first year in office, President Aquino placed land reform on the back burner, arguing that it was more urgent to set up the constitutional framework for the 'new democracy'. On occasion she let slip deep misgivings about land reform. 'By sharing out land, you only create more problems,' she said barely two weeks into her presidency, 'because sugar cultivation, for instance, is definitely uneconomic if carried out in small plots.' This argument, so dear to the hearts of export-crop producers, has been debunked by respected Filipino agricultural economists and peasant organisations.

In January the massacre by Malacanang Palace guards of peasants demonstrating for reform dramatically moved the issue to the front burner. For the first time, Aquino agreed to meet with peasant organisations, and she established a Cabinet Action Committee to hold hearings and present proposals for agrarian reform decrees. The committee's first drafts drew heavily on the work done by progressives within the Department of Agrarian Reform. Whereas previous legislation had been limited to rice and corn farms, this was to be comprehensive, affecting coconut and sugar plantations, the traditional heart of economic and political power in the Philippines.

Landowners inundated the newspapers with articles and full-page advertisements, arguing that land reform would be disastrous for the economy. Some publicly vowed to resist it with private armies. 'Not one inch of my grandfather's land will I surrender,' a coconut planter in the Bicol region told me, adding that he had signed an oath in blood. A group of Negros sugar planters even threatened to secede from the republic. The besieged Cabinet Action Committee went through 14 drafts, each more watered down than its predecessor. Then, with less than a week of decree-making power remaining, Aquino took the matter out of the committee's hands and turned it over to five lawyers, including her top aides, the controversial Joker Arroyo and Teddy Boy Locsin, none of whom had any expert knowledge of the issue. The resulting decree, issued on 22 July, proclaimed itself the 'Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program' (CARP).

God against reform

Perhaps the CARP's most blatant concession to landed interests was the elimination of a provision that in early drafts had set a ceiling of seven hectares (17 and a half acres) on private ownership. This figure had already been criticised as too high by peasant organisations and even by the World Bank in a staff report on land reform, and it would have exempted at least two-thirds of the country's agricultural land from any redistribution. Seven hectares — which might seem low to those familiar with land tenure in Latin America — is far more than Filipino farmers typically cultivate by themselves and is generous in comparison to the three-hectare limit set by Taiwan and South Korea.

Rather than specifying this ceiling and other essential aspects of the reform herself, Aquino passed the buck to the Congress. More than 90 per cent of the 200 elected members of the House of Representatives are landowners, many at the upper end of the scale. The Congress had just convened in late July when 114 members of the House lined up behind a bill, also titled 'Comprehensive Agrarian Reform', specifying no less than a 24 hectare retention limit, which would exclude at least 88 per cent of the country's agricultural land. ('God is against land reform,' testified one leading member of the House Committee on Agrarian Reform, 'for He gave us the commandment "Though shalt not steal."')

Aquino's proviso govering compensation is also calculated to appease landowners. Expropriated owners would be paid what they consider 'the current fair market value' of their property. Emboldened by this proviso, the landowners' bill now before Congress would require 'market value' compensation to be paid immediately and in cash. Representative Bonifacio Gillego, the pro-reform chair of the House Committee on Agrarian Reform, told me this move was patently designed to paralyse any reform by raising its costs to astronomical levels.

Dole, Del Monte and the other giant multinational agribusinesses that operate hundreds of thousands of hectares of bananas, pineapples and other crops are also likely to escape Aquino's reform through loopholes such as an exemption for 'developmental considerations'. Nor does the CARP threaten the largest holder of agricultural lands — the US Defense Department, which occupies but leaves idle much of the roughly 169,500 acres allotted to the US military bases. The decree exempts land for reasons of 'national defence'.

Corporate landowners enjoy one further advantage under the CARP. In lieu of land redistribution, they may offer their workers the option to purchase corporation capital stock equivalent to the value of the land. Aquino's insistence that her brothers and sisters do something about Hacienda Luisita is likely to result in such a plan, allowing their 4,500 resident employees to purchase a minority interest in the family's corporation.

In essence, Aquino would like land redistribution to be voluntary; landowners would be persuaded that selling their land to the government for redistribution could be profitable. She would compensate them so handsomely that they could buy into other areas of the economy — or California real estate — and be even better off. Such a vision is, as noted, financially out of the question: but more fundamental, it isn't agrarian reform. Genuine agrarian reform is not a mere economic arrangement but seeks to redress social injustices, especially economic and political inequalities. As such, it is a zero-sum game.

If there are any teeth in Aquino's decree, they affect the supposed beneficiaries. For one thing, recipients would be required to pay for their land — presumably the price paid to the owner by the government — in 30 equal instalments at 6 per cent interest. Default would result in repossession of the land by a government agency. The World Bank, which predicts a result similar to the 80 per cent default rate under Marcos's Operation Land Transfer scheme, has strongly criticised the measure, arguing that it wipes out the reform's potential economic benefits. The World Bank proposed an alternative of a one-time charge of 600 pesos (about $30), which would have been acceptable to the peasant organisations but Aquino rejected it.

One of the few provisos that Aquino has not left to Congress permanently disqualifies peasants who 'prematurely enter the land'. This undoubtedly is intended to discredit the leftist National Peasant Movement (KMP) and local peasant organisations that have promoted popular takeovers of thousands of acres of land 'ill-gotten' by Marcos's cronies. KMP organisers fear that this clause effectively licenses landowners and their private armies, and the military and vigilante groups to harass and evict peasant families at will.

The popular Reds

In late May dozens of farmer and 'pro-people' organisations united around a common program of agrarian reform, based on the principle of owner cultivation. By joining this coalition, the KMP compromised on several longstanding demands in the faint hope that a modest but meaningful shift in agrarian reform might yet be salvaged. The KMP leadership agreed, for example, that landowners should receive compensation on a sliding scale, with the higher payments per hectare going to the smaller landlords. This pragmatic pro-reform coalition has worked hard with the eight nationalist House members. Gillego Bonifacio told me that he was initially able to push the progressives' bill through the House committee because 'the Philippines has not only absentee landlords but also absentee committee members'. But still he saw no real prospect of the bill's eventual passage.

By mid-October, a previously sanguine official confided to me that the most that could now be expected was a series of publicity gestures.

The failure to deliver meaningful agrarian reform has set the stage for a rural catastrophe. KMP leaders estimate that so far this year peasants have occupied 70,000 hectares of idle land. The only option now, they say, is to step up takeovers and put the idle lands into production. Peasants who take land reform into their own hands are likely to provoke a backlash from a restive military demanding a freer hand to go after the insurgents' mass base. The short-term result will be widespread human rights abuses, including the relocation of entire villages by force.

In September I attended a gathering of some 200 sugar cane planters in Bacolod, Negros, addressed by Romeo Guanzon and by the six other sugar cane planters who took all the island's seats in the May Congressional elections. Guanzon proudly presented the landowners' bill as a triumph of reason over madness. Two hours into the meeting and with a plane to catch, I left the hall. Straight ahead of me as I walked down the front steps, I saw hundreds of dirt-poor peasant families camped at the entrance to the provincial capital. They had been forced out of their villages in southeastern Negros by aerial bombings. The Governor of Negros had sought to justify the bombings on the ground that the targets were 'Red villages'. The government knew this, he told a visiting US journalist, 'because in the [Congressional] elections most of the villagers voted for the popular candidate.' □

Joseph Collins is co-founder of the Institute for Food and Development Policy in New York. His latest book is World Hunger: Twelve Myths, *Grove Press. This article originally appeared in* The Nation.

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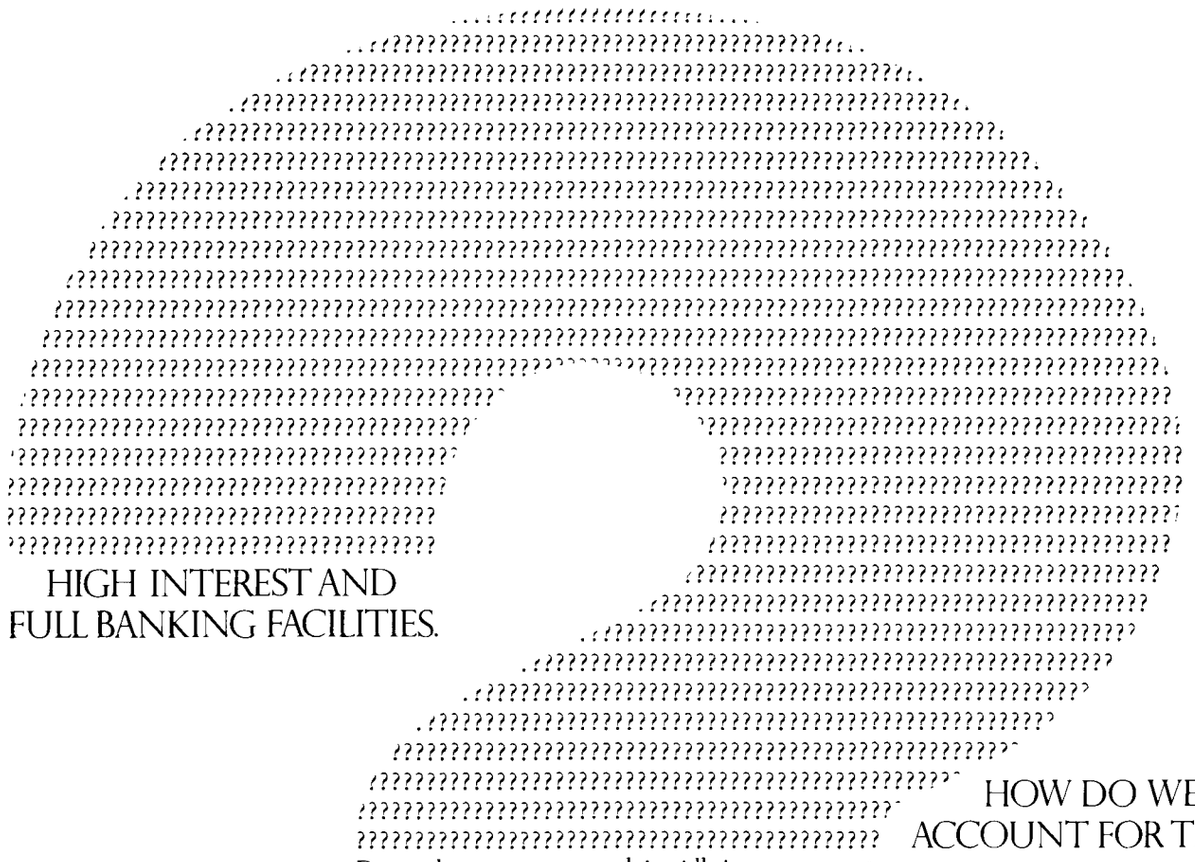

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MEDIA

Why Labour has no media policy

Denis MacShane

PUT YOURSELF into a time machine: go back 80, or even 50 years, as the MPs and councillors, the Fabians and the academics, the constituency activists and the trade unionists are busy devising policy for Labour. Take an industry that employed ten times as many workers as the coal or steel industries, that was constantly expanding, that was owned or controlled by a handful of individuals — some of them foreigners or based abroad; an industry that wielded immense political influence and that was highly profitable thanks in large part to a set of distribution cartels and was monopolistic in many cities in Britain. In every sense an industry that was one of the commanding heights of the economy.

Furthermore this was an industry free from effective social control and which had escaped any of the reforms brought in by nineteenth and early twentieth century parliaments to apply some accountability and fairness to the development of British social and economic relations.

Is it thinkable that the Hugh Daltons or the Ernie Bevins, the G.D.H. Coles or the R.H. Tawneys would not have targeted such an industry for major reform and made the question of ownership, control and method of operation of such an industry a central policy question for the Labour Party in the first half of the twentieth century?

Yet such an industry does exist in Britain and the potted description above does scant justice to its contemporary financial, employment and political weight. But as we edge towards the end of the second half of the century, today's Labour Party seems uninterested in this industry. The industry of course is the media: and of all the subjects that will be put into the melting pot of Labour's review over the next two years, policy on the media is most likely not to emerge at all.

Why is this? Why despite the great interest in the media is it a taboo subject, the great untouchable for Labour policy-makers? And before anyone showers the *New Statesman* with all the resolutions passed at the Labour Party or TUC conferences and sends in multi-volume editions of all the speeches, attacks, jokes by Labour leaders on the subject, please pause and ask *whether Labour in any of the last three elections, or any before that, has ever made the media an issue and put forward specific legislative proposals dealing in a meaningful way with media questions that would be passed by a Labour government?*

It is a puzzle that has remained with me since I first put my foot into a BBC newsroom as a trainee journalist 18 years ago. The sneers of my peers in those days were reserved for students who were busy occupying every university administration office they could break into. Phrases like 'unwashed', 'manipulated', 'outside agitators', 'get out and do a day's work', were the small change of newsroom chatter, though they never found their way into the carefully modulated news bulletins. In contrast, those carried each day the obligatory descent by a member of the royal family into the Midlands. I still shudder to recall those hours spent in cutting rooms over 30 seconds of Princess This and Duke That. Here was the very heart of the BBC — its devotion to royalty!

Having grown up on a 1960s London diet of the *Evening Standard, The Times* and the *New Statesman*, I found the unrelieved provincial Toryism of the Birmingham press quite shocking. As a new member of the Labour Party there were things going on in the Asian district of Birmingham where I lived that would have made great news stories — but none of them appeared in the local press. There were also municipal scandals — but those appeared in the *Sunday Times* or *Private Eye*, and never in the *Birmingham Evening Mail*. Labour MPs and trade unionists were often under fire, a point which was worrying because of the immense monopoly power that the city newspaper company enjoyed. There were other problems that bothered me in those far-off days in Birmingham; like the refusal of the media to employ black journalists, or the assumption that in any strike the unions were guilty and the employer innocent.

> ***Why should a superb media animal like Roy Hattersley, or Fleet Street's very own creation, Ken Livingstone, or Joe Ashton on £45,000 a year, seek to change what strokes and feeds them so well?***

As a journalist and Labour Party member it seemed to me that here was a subject worthy of political discussion and perhaps even legislative reform. Lots of other people thought the same: the 1970s saw an explosion of political, academic and journalistic discussion about the media. It is still going on. Academic and popular books on the media pour out of publishers: there are dozens of university media departments where none existed in 1970. The quality papers publish media sections and the doings of Rupert Murdoch or John Birt are big news (and business). Yet from the perspective of the Labour Party embracing serious media reform, here we are in 1987 no further forward than in 1970.

All the important changes in the media that have taken place since then have either been brought in by a Conservative government (commercial radio, Channel 4, future break-up of broadcasting duopoly) or by businessmen (free newspapers, post-Wapping national press, videos, desk-top publishing). The left has been reduced to ghastly publishing nightmares (*Scottish Daily News, News on Sunday*), the futile royal commissions set up by the last Labour government, and endless rhetoric and resolutions which count for nothing.

What is it about Labour that makes it so frightened of media reform? Three main reasons stand out. First, it is not part of Labour's historical baggage. The 1945 government, that Talmudic benchmark by which all policies are to be judged, showed no interest in media reform. Reforming the media requires a new radicalism, not a defence of worthy values and institutions. It also involves taking lessons from other countries. Simply to apply some of the reforms that provide more plural and available media in continental Europe would transform the media in Britain but Labour's insularity prevents any such borrowing of 'foreign' ideas.

Secondly, and always underestimated on the left, is the very powerful hold that the idea of a free press untouched by legislation has in people's minds. As Thomas Jefferson put it 200 years ago: 'If I had to choose between government without newspapers or newspapers without government, I would opt for the latter.' The grisly media in all the Soviet bloc countries, *glasnost* notwithstanding, the imprisonment of poets in Cuba and Democracy Wall writers in China send out a continuous message that an untrammelled socialist idea of the media is a disaster.

Third, the role of the unions in the media reform debate has been muddled. To listen to most speakers over the years, the single most progressive reform that could be undertaken would be to close down most of the popular papers in Fleet Street and a great deal of television pap from the BBC and ITV. Yet any such move would, and has produced cries of outrage from the media unions. Many of the left's calls for media reform have been seen, with justice, as an extension of union power. Union demands that a pre-condition of media reform is the maintenance of the *status quo* in terms of pay and conditions have deprived the campaign of a radical appeal beyond the shores of organised labour.

Finally, the commitment of Labour policy-makers, right and left, to media reform is questionable. Many pad their incomes very handsomely from articles, TV appearances, columns, book serialisations and so forth. Does the anger over the media lessen as the demands for articles at £250 a time, the lunches at the *Gay Hussar*, the embossed invitations to the media soirées at the conferences flow in? Why should a superb media animal like Roy Hattersley, or Fleet Street's very own creation, Ken Livingstone, or Joe Ashton MP on £45,000 a year for a weekly column, seek to change what strokes and feeds them so well?

Yet the issue of media reform will not go away. Hungerford, the *Daily Star*, Murdoch's audacious bid for the *Financial Times*, most libel cases, are issues of great public concern and potentially workable media reform should be capable of generating wide public support. But it will have to start from what *can* be done, rather than what many would like to have on an ideal shopping list of media reform.

Jean Seaton, co-editor of a new book* which discusses these problems, writes a chapter herself about the way the media handled (or did not handle) the atrocity stories of the Nazi extermination of the Jews in the war. She makes the important difference between what people knew and what they believed. The media, especially the BBC, knew about the Holocaust but could not believe the Germans were capable of such ruthless mechanical genocide.

Labour and much of the British public know that the media need reform but no one believes that it can be done. A little more faith is needed. □

* *The Media in British Politics*, edited by Jean Seaton and Ben Pimlott, is published by Gower, price £27.50.

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'We have been through blacker times than these'

DANNY MORRISON, ***Sinn Fein's deputy leader and director of publicity, responds to the Enniskillen massacre. Interview by***
JOHN LLOYD

SINN FEIN, the IRA's political wing, values the support given to its general cause by left-wing Labour MPs and others in the Labour Party — support which this week has caused a deep rift within the party focused on the figure of Ken Livingstone. But the IRA's political wing also understands that the MPs will have to distance themselves from it in the period following the Enniskillen deaths. 'It is known as keeping your head down,' said Danny Morrison, number two in the Sinn Fein hierarchy to Gerry Adams and the organisation's director of publicity.

However, speaking to the *New Statesman* in an interview in Sinn Fein's office in Belfast's Falls Road earlier this week, Morrison took care to specify the kind of support enjoyed by Sinn Fein from the Labour MPs. He said that a number of Labour MPs — he mentioned Jeremy Corbyn and Ken Livingstone, both backbenchers, and Clare Short, an employment spokeswoman — were helpful in publicising their belief that 'the British should get out of our country'; but said that they did not say they supported the armed struggle. He said that in talks with Livingstone, the former GLC leader had explicitly told him he did not. 'We don't *ask* them to support the armed struggle. We don't *ask* them to support the IRA.'

Morrison's remarks add a gloss to the accusation made against Livingstone at the Labour Co-ordinating Committee's meeting last weekend that he had 'blood on his hands'. Sinn Fein *does* look to him, and others who take a Troops Out line, but for *political* assistance, not for approval of violence. Sinn Fein expects that political support to continue, and though it expects the pro-Republican MPs to be silent while the memory of Enniskillen remains fresh, Morrison believes that their tactical silence will be caused more by pressure from the press and other political parties than from demands from the constituency Labour Party activists.

Ballot box and Armalite

In the course of the interview, Morrison also gave some detail on the reasons for the Enniskillen bomb 'disaster' (as he called it); said that the IRA was now looking at a new 'balance' in its internal control mechanisms; admitted the organisation does not know if the British army detonated the bomb, as the IRA charged; said he believed the emotional effect of Enniskillen would soon wear off, and already was wearing off among the Republican community in Northern Ireland; and, finally, stressed several times that the 'armed struggle' would continue, and that — in the phrase he himself coined some years ago — the IRA would continue to hold a ballot box in one hand and an Armalite (rifle) in the other.

Morrison confirmed speculation that the IRA had decentralised its command structure, and that this had led to more 'freelance' efforts by active service units which acted semi-autonomously. The organisation had, last year, become 'infiltrated by British agents, and was suffering from informers, especially in Belfast here. To counter that we operated a very tight structure; with the result you had strong central command, but very few operations. So at the start of this year, the IRA decentralised power. That has put the IRA back on its feet again and many of the successful operations have taken place in Belfast. The problem is that this means you lose control. The IRA is now looking at how to strike a balance between central control and decentralisation.'

On several occasions, Morrison characterised the Enniskillen bomb as 'an unmitigated disaster', or a similar phrase. 'No Republican could ever defend or justify the Enniskillen bombing and none will ever attempt to do so. What I presume was planned to be a local operation has turned out to be an unmitigated disaster in terms of the fact that 11 people were killed.' Morrison also several times drew a sharp distinction between operations aimed at killing army or police personnel, and those which killed civilians, and denied that the IRA had reverted to an earlier tactic of terror directed at civilians.

He also drew a sharp distinction between criticism of the Enniskillen bomb and 'publicly condemning the IRA. We say the Republican movement has a major problem with Enniskillen, but we don't say so to give enjoyment to the enemy. The volunteers who carried out that operation have to be protected.'

He was frank that he did not know whether or not the bomb had been activated by a British army device, as IRA spokesmen were reported to have alleged almost immediately after the bomb went off. He merely pointed to the sophistication of British military equipment, and to revelations in *Spycatcher* and evidence produced by Captain Fred Holroyd, which allege 'dirty tricks' by British security services.

> ***'People are justifiably critical of Enniskillen. Putting such a bomb on a country road where an army target was expected would reduce risk to civilians to a miniscule one. But putting it in a public place on a public occasion was a major disaster'***

'Having said that, people are justifiably critical of the operation. Putting such a bomb on a

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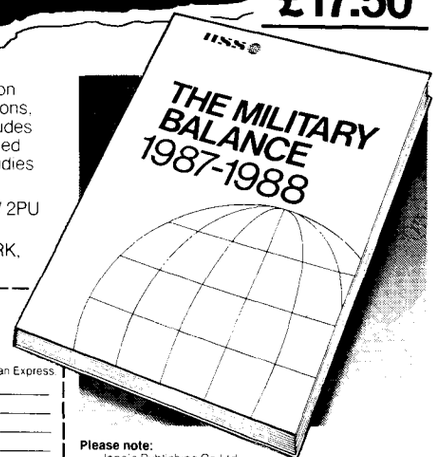

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country road where an army target was expected would reduce risk to civilians to a miniscule one. But putting it in a public place on a public occasion was a major disaster.'

A temporary effect

Morrison divided the reaction to Enniskillen into four parts. On the one side was the Northern Republican community: there, he said, 'the effect is wearing off already'. Much of it, he claimed, had been 'orchestrated', and he told the story of how, on Sunday night, he had shared a cab with a woman teacher from a Catholic school and some of her primary-school-age pupils, who were being shepherded to church to hear the statement of condemnation of the IRA promulgated by the Standing Conference of Irish Catholic Bishops. 'That wasn't spontaneous. They were being taken there.' By contrast, he said, 'we did not have to orchestrate the protests that people made in church over the statement. One man (at St Paul's Church, on the Falls Road) argued with the priest and walked out, while others applauded him.'

'We have,' said Morrison, 'been through blacker times than these' — and recalled when, in 1976, the 'Peace People' campaign had started in both the Catholic and Protestant communities, and a group had marched on the Sinn Fein offices with placards reading 'The Falls says sorry'.

The second, important group, were those on whom Republican propaganda had had some effect — especially in the Irish Republic, in mainland UK and in Continental Europe. 'The damage has been done in areas where Republicans had to do a lot of convincing. There's been a tidal wave of criticism. We'll just have to face up to it, take it on the chin, and carry on with the work again.'

A third group, about whom Morrison was particularly contemptuous, was the Catholic hierarchy — the bishops and other clergy who had issued strong condemnation of the action. They were, he said, acting as agents for the British, and were opposed to the IRA because of its opposition to the church. 'They see that we might bring about a real change; we have not shrunk from querying the church, we have queried its values, we have queried its property. We have argued for the separation of church and state. But the bishops will have no effect at all: people see through the holiness of it.'

Finally, the British government had sought to make capital out of the incident, and were totally hypocritical in doing so. 'Let's face it, if this had happened to a group of Catholics drinking in a bar, there would not have been anything of this.' Enniskillen had, of course, rendered any rapport between the Unionist community and Republicans — never a large possibility — completely out of the question — 'but that's a consequence of a colonial situation'.

The Sinn Fein leader then gave a series of relatively long justifications for the continuation of the armed struggle in spite of the existence of democratic forms in Northern Ireland. He drew heavily on a particular view of Irish history, saying that 'the British want history to start here and now. But you can't start there: in the Six Counties (of Northern Ireland) you have to go back a long way.'

It was history, he said, 'which explains why young nationalists are prepared to take up the bomb and the gun in order to change things'. It was impossible to talk of democracy in the Six Counties, because it had been artificially created to perpetuate a Protestant majority. Constitutional nationalism had achieved precisely one piece of legislation in the old Stormont parliament: legislation on the protection of wild-fowl. Britain would never give up the state unless forced: even if Catholics came to outnumber Protestants in the future, the ruling Unionists would simply redraw the boundaries to ensure a new majority.

> ***'There would be no let-up in the campaign . . . The use of terror is endemic to IRA practice: no condemnation from any quarter will affect the course it takes'***

Shrivelling foothold

The political strategy, which has seen successively Bobby Sands (who died at the end of a hunger strike which, by common consent, hugely increased IRA support), Owen Carron and Gerry Adams elected to the Commons and a large number of Sinn Fein councillors elected to district and town councils, was embarked on to 'cash in the chips we'd earned during the armed struggle'. In doing grassroots political work, Sinn Fein had found 'a huge unmet need' on the part of people who did not know how to claim their rights, and who had felt crushed by British rule.

Northern Ireland, said Morrison, was 'the shrivelling foothold of British imperialism'; and though 'we haven't beaten the Brits, they haven't beaten us either: we're still here, and we've nowhere else to go. A 20-year old struggle has bred a philosophical attitude.'

The Republican movement had already effected the most important revolution: a revolution in the hearts of the Republican community. It had been hard because, overwhelmingly and devoutly Catholic as that community is, it did not want to accept armed struggle: 'there is a natural abhorrence of violence against other human beings.' But many now saw it was the only way.

Throughout the interview of some 75 minutes, Morrison was very largely free of cant. Most — not all — of his regret for Enniskillen was couched in terms of its effect on IRA/Sinn Fein support: and his calculation was that that support, while presently at a low ebb, would come back. Thus, while steps had to be taken — and, he suggested, were being taken — to seek to ensure a similar incident did not recur there could be no let-up in the campaign. The use of terror is endemic to IRA practice: no condemnation from any quarter will affect the course it takes. □

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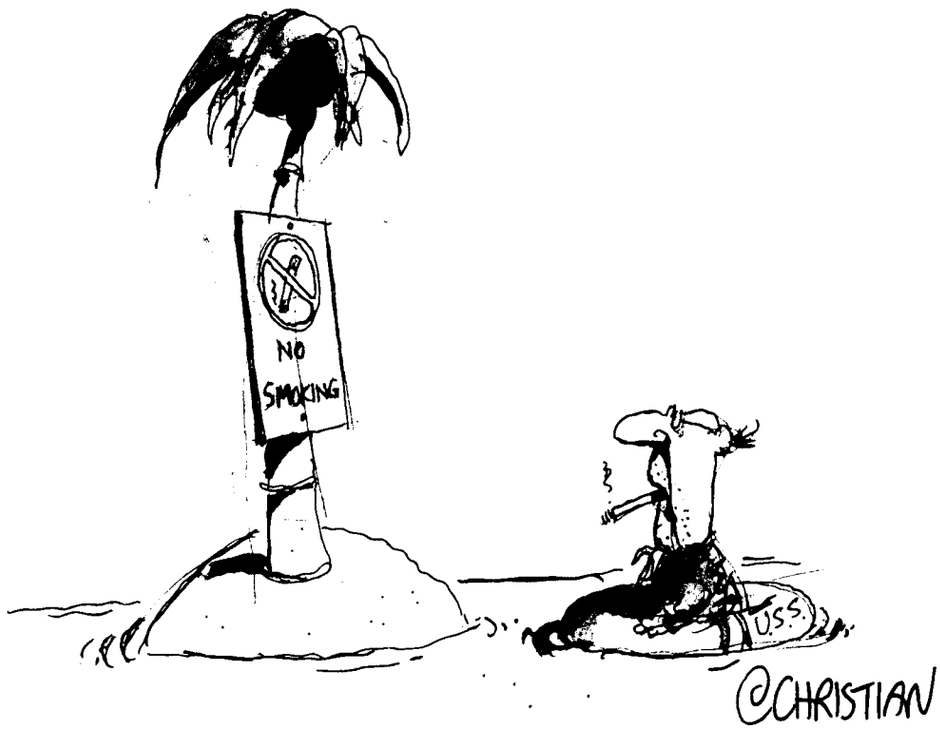

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ESSAY

Death of the citizen

Workers, says **SARAH BENTON,** *have been dealt with. Now it's the turn of citizens — especially the socially disadvantaged who would organise to enforce their rights*

WHEN JOHN MOORE, the go-ahead Secretary for Social Services, announced, 'We believe that dependence in the long run decreases human happiness and reduces human freedom,' who was he talking about? Not, it seems, his Prime Minister, who surely depended on her husband's income to support her, their two children and nanny in her 20-year climb to the top. Certainly not women in general, for not one of his plans for welfare is designed to decrease women's dependence on their husbands and enhance their freedom to operate in the public world. It was obviously not a statement about the London Stock Exchange either, as it dances to the jerks of Wall Street; or a reference to the global capitalist economy, which is nothing if not a mesh of interdependent relationships.

Nor, of course, was Moore referring to that primary unit of dependence, the family. He went straight on to say: 'We believe the well-being of individuals is best protected and promoted when they are helped to be independent to use their talents to take care of themselves and their families, and to achieve things on their own, which is one of the greatest satisfactions life can offer.' What is striking is the utter unselfconsciousness with which he switches between the 'independent' individual and the dependent family members.

From passages later in the speech, on the value of 'self-help' groups, it is clear that his strictures don't apply either to those voluntary organisations and friends on whom the disabled (his favoured example) or a single parent might depend.

No, this assertion from the New Conservatism of the proper constitution of society applies only to one relationship: that of the socially disadvantaged citizen to the state. For what the New Conservatism wants to do is cut away all those political rights which those without power or status have gradually attached to themselves in the last 200 years. It wants to reduce citizenship to the minimum requirements of a nominal democracy — to, for instance, the right to vote. Mrs Thatcher put it this way in an interview with *Woman's Own* last month: 'There is no such thing as society. There are only individual men and women and families.' She cannot, of course, will away the actual existence of society, but she can assert a wish for *political* society not to exist: a society in which people associate to demand of the state the political means to overcome disadvantage. In the place of political society, the New Conservatives would like to see a 'free zone' in which people would have no choice but to enter the labour market 'on their own', beholden to just one relationship: that of the contract between individual worker and employer, buyer and seller.

But it is welfare politics, not employment rights or even education (Kenneth Baker is judiciously apolitical) which has brought forth a Big Speech this autumn. Why welfare? John Moore is an ambitious man who wants to make his mark, but the need for a breakthrough in welfare politics is larger than personal ambition. For the last couple of years, the New Conservatives have felt that it is this welfare area — the nexus of social, moral and political ties outside the labour market — which now blocks their progress. The Centre for Policy Studies (once exclusively economic), the Social Affairs Unit and a number of new social policy units have all bent their minds to how to unpick the politics of welfare rights.

> ***'John Moore is an ambitious man, but the need for a breakthrough in welfare politics is larger than personal ambition. For the last couple of years, New Conservatives have felt that it is the welfare area which blocks their progress'***

Why should this be so important to the New Conservatism? It's not the sheer amount of money that is spent on providing for the sick and needy and for the unemployed. Mr Moore doesn't even refer to the cost. No, it's for two reasons. The first is that the ethic of 'dependence' is in sharp conflict with an ethic of free, self-supporting individuals and, although this inconsistency doesn't matter to pragmatic governments, or those working in a tradition of political assumptions, it does to those attempting to establish the overall sway of a new political ideology. The second is that the political rights of citizens to have expectations of the state is anathema to the New Conservatism. In particular, the attachment of political rights to a range of social groups — mothers, women, blacks, even workers — constitutes the largest single block *outside* the state to the absolute political power of government on one side and the 'free zone' of individuals supporting their families on the other. Much has been done to restrict the rights of workers and their associations. So far, the socially disadvantaged and their organisations remain a monolith of opposition. And it is this, the kernel of Moore's attack, that like an undigestible stone got left out in the coverage of the speech.

'Moore plans switch from "nanny" state', announced the *Sunday Times* in its headline. Not that Mr Moore had used the term 'nanny state', but it's a phrase that we are all expected to understand, while recognising immediately that the 'nanny' is a deplorable thing. Who wants their public status as adult citizens to be dependent on nanny? No, that sort of thing is best left to the privacy of a chap's fantasies.

If welfare politics were not so important in making up political society, the drive of New Conservatism to eliminate them would not have such profound implications. But they are and it does. For here we are hearing, from the party that has made a virtue of having no political theory, a public discussion on some of the central issues of classic political theory.

No anarchists here

So what is New Conservatism saying about the fundamental issues of citizens and state, rights and benefits, the public and the private sphere — about what, indeed, is political? It is not a body of right-wing, anarchist thought, though the USA in particular has produced a few of these curious hybrids, who envisage the dissolution of all political forms into a society of private, commercial organisations. No, this government is certainly not going to abolish itself in favour of some 'apolitical' administration; it is not, in that sense, proposing that the lines between 'public' and 'private' be redrawn. No Conservative is arguing, for instance, that sexual activity inside a family, once the essence of the private, should be immune from state intervention. There is a cross-party consensus that the very privacy of the family means that only the state has the power to intervene in it.

We need to go back, with Mr Moore, to the middle of the 16th century: the point when, he told Conservative Political Centre, the City of London first imposed a compulsory tax on the rich in order to help the poor. This is the period in which the modern nation-state is emerging. And it is in the next 100 years that political writers begin to elaborate that distinction between public and private — and the proper domain of the 'contract' between citizens and state — which long provided the basis of modern political theory. It was a distinction drawn not because of any beliefs about the intrinsic nature of the state, but because of a modern conception of a *man*'s rights and duties.

Thus, in civil or political affairs (the terms are used by Locke interchangeably), he has a duty to accept the laws of the state while, in private or family life, he is beholden to religious authority; which in turn upholds his authority as husband and father. As a citizen, rather than a royal or feudal subject, he also has a right to take part in political society — while, as a male head of household, he also has a right to govern the affairs of his family. (His family including, until the 18th century, all those in his employ as well as his wife, children and other dependent relatives.)

The distinction is articulated clearly by one of the earliest political writers, the Frenchman Jean Bodin. From the unequal relationships of the family, where husband rules over wife, father over child, master over servant and owner over slave, the 'lord' head of household alone can become the political activist, 'leaving his family to enter into a city, and his domestic affairs to entreat of public; and instead of a lord calleth himself a citizen.' It was a fundamental division of political powers

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embraced by a new class of merchants, tradesmen, professionals, and one which could not withstand the industrial revolution which swept servants and women out of the total aegis of the head of household into the relative political liberation of factory work — from where the long campaign for universal suffrage began.

But once all people are, in theory, equal citizens, there need be no limit to what they demand of the state. It is, after all, *their* state. If they want to demand the universal provision, as of right, of a health service, care of the elderly or invalids and an income when no work is available, they can and will. As Mr Moore stresses, the welfare state did not just arrive, large and perfectly formed, in 1945. It was created by human hand.

So, too, is any distinction between public and private, between what is appropriately political and what is not; there is no *absolute* distinction. The private is merely that area for which the dominant group in society does not wish to be held accountable, according to some accepted public values of, say, equality or justice. The upper-class — no, the rich — Englishman expects equal discretion about his money, his sex life and his private dominion of wife and family. The quality *Independent* reported that Spurs' manager David Pleat had resigned 'in the wake of new allegations about his private life'; the common *Daily Mirror* avoided the euphemism and said 'allegations of his involvement with prostitutes'. On the same day, 24 October, grown men were said to weep tears of affront into their gin and tonics when they heard that Lester Piggott had been made publicly accountable for what top trainer Henry Cecil described as 'the additional private agreement' for his earnings. The same men expect details of the incomes of the poor to be be public knowledge.

What becomes political, then, is not bound by any set rules either. It all depends on who is challenging whom for power in what arena. When feminism defined the confinement of women to the 'private' areas of sex, home and family as the root of women's inequality, it challenged that distinction between private and public and, in doing so, made the private political. But it only remains political as long as women sustain a fight about it. There is no absolute moral value which dictates that the sexual is intrinsically political.

Nor does a challenge to one distinction between private and public mean that there are no valid distinctions between public and private to be drawn, no areas of life, no conflicts which are not political. It all depends on how power is exercised and who is challenging it and how.

Where does this leave Mr Moore's welfare proposals, Mr Lee's earnest hopes that no 'social rights' be attached to the work process, Mr — sorry, Sir — Rhodes Boyson's fulminations against inappropriate political values of 'equality' being attached to education? For there is no doubt that the essence of Moore's plan is to detach welfare from political rights. He is almost explicit about this. Here is the passage that preceded the most widely quoted section of his speech:

> Under the guise of compassion people were encouraged to see themselves as 'victims of circumstance', mere putty in the grip of giant forces beyond their control. Rather than being seen as individuals, people were categorised into groups and given labels that enshrined their dependent status: 'unemployed', 'single-parent', 'handicapped'. Thus their confidence and will to help themselves was subtly undermined and they were taught to think only government action could affect their lives. Talk of 'rights' came to dominate public debate, but 'rights' in this context too often simply meant welfare benefits handed out by bureaucrats. Even many voluntary organisations shifted their emphasis and changed from service groups who actually gave help to pressure groups who simply pushed the government to give help.

Under the guise of honest speaking, Moore seems to have introduced two giant forces of his own: the Hidden Teacher and the Mysterious Categoriser who, in the labyrinth of the welfare state, cunningly misled ordinary individuals into social pits labelled 'handicap' etc. While languishing there, their human spirit was 'corrupted' (his word) and they fell into 'the sullen apathy of dependence' (his phrase).

Help as a right

In fact, as all such groups know, it was precisely to escape from the helplessness of individual isolation that people chose to band together, according to the specific 'disability' which defined their relation to the state, and form those pressure groups which demanded that 'rights' be attached to their need for help. It is the greatest irony (or the greatest example of Mr Moore's dishonesty) that the group which he upholds as a model of individual achievement, the disabled, had pioneered the notion that, as disabled people, they had *rights*. They were angry when their attempt to move a bill outlawing discrimination against disabled people was opposed by this government. And it is the disabled who made the first and strongest attack on Moore's welfare plans.

It is deeply mendacious of Moore to present his attempt to remove the politics from welfare as a choice between independence and dependence. By depriving the disabled of the right to state support, their dependence is merely transferred to the 'private' sphere of friends, family and, in Moore's utopia, a de-politicised voluntary sector. The demand for help as of right is a demand to be freed from the humiliation of gratitude for charity, from the sullen apathy of resentment at having to rely on the favours of family and friends.

During the quarter century in which, according to Moore, the British sunk into their sullen apathy of dependence, the notion of citizenship grew and grew. It grew under the banner of equal rights, socialism's strongest hand, rather than of freedom from want, hunger, squalor, ignorance — liberalism's cry. Liberalism, the Beveridge creed which founded the welfare state, proposed the temporary and occasional intervention of the state in order to allow people to return to the private sphere. Those limits are one reason why socialists, whatever their present-day agonies about freedom, have preferred the talk of equal rights. New Conservatism is quite right to see egalitarianism as the politics which allows the continuous expansion of what is political, and of the state.

Does this mean that the scramble of socialists, social democrats and liberals to pick up the banner of freedom — hastily dropping incriminating evidence of a one-time support for egalitarianism, centralised planning, the strong redistributive state — is mistaken? For short of an economic revolution that ensures an adequate income for all, and a constitutional revolution which allows people to be active public citizens as workers, single mothers, the disabled, consumers, then what other strategy is there for pressing through the barriers confining you within the limits that a free market imposes? For the social philosophy of the New Conservatism is that of letting the strongest rule, letting the tallest poppies take the nourishment of the rest.

Yet the Conservatives who came to power in 1979 were not the only ones to baulk at the continuous expansion of the state and of the political, or at the expectation that every social problem should be solved by government. The endless calling on the government to make everything all right in Labour Party resolutions has produced some of the most sterile thinking of socialism. And Moore's belief that if people get up and help themselves they feel better is undoubtedly true. If all relationships and all expectations end up being governed by state provision, you do end up with a form of totalitarianism: an ideology which declares there is no separation between civil society and state and mystifies the actual power exercised by state functionaries.

In Britain, the pressure to resolve all social conflict through expanded state intervention ended in the winter of discontent. Today, few feel like fighting to the death to defend comprehensive education, the universal health service, the welfare system of the 1970s. Moore is quite right: it made too many sullen and apathetic; at best it makes people angry and frustrated. But that's not because it comes via the state; it's because people have no control over it and the thousand and one petty rules designed to exclude all but the most determined.

What can truly 'empower' citizens and make the local state accountable (Mr Ridley's phrase) is a system in which service users exercise their citizens' rights to bargain and negotiate for how money allocated for their use is spent. Not, as with trade unions in the last Labour government, as partners in the state, but as citizens who come together as parents, or the disabled, or single parents, or mothers and discuss directly what services would be of most use to them. It would produce needed reform of local government, a change in the role of councillors and the accountability of 'the local state' without snatching away the powers of local authorities — in the name of accountability. It would mean increasing political rights, not reducing them. It wouldn't stop a group of white parents wanting their children to go to predominantly white schools — or a group of muslim parents wanting muslim state schools — but the sectarianism of those demands would be mitigated by having to argue the case with other parents and teachers, rather than merely receiving the decision on your child's education in an official letter from an unapproachable state authority.

The Conservative Party wouldn't like it. It forces politics back into the heart of decisions about public life. The Labour Party won't like it. It undercuts their authority, especially in the shrinking bastions of local councils. But, if the Labour Party is to free itself from its moribund role of servicing the state machine, or from its nurturing of potentially totalitarian viewpoints, then supporting the growth of political self-help groups might be its best bet. If it recognises and trumpets their political potential. □

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ARTS

PHOTOGRAPHY

Dead reckoning

Liz Heron

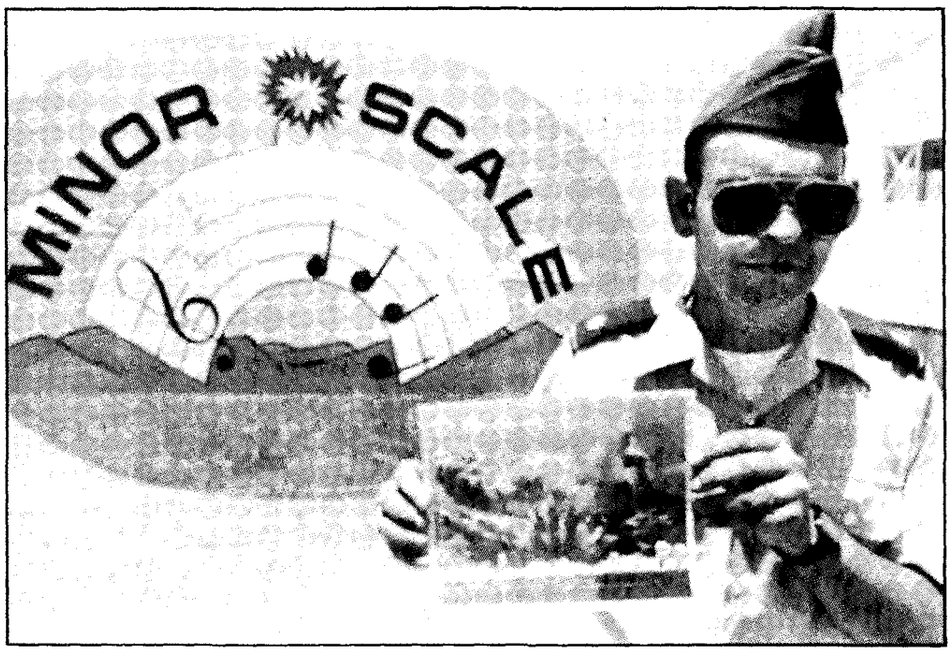
At Work in the Fields of the Bomb
ROBERT DEL TREDICI *Smith's Gallery, Covent Garden, until 22 November; book published by Harrap, £9.95*

HOW DO YOU PICTURE the enormity of what the nuclear industry is doing to our lives, when secrecy nurtures great tracts of its power?

One way is to use symbolic and oblique commentary, as did much of the work in the recent photographic exhibition *A World's Waste*, produced by the Brewery Arts Centre, near Sellafield. It fell foul of nuclear whitewash when BNF threatened legal action unless one of the exhibits was removed — a truly characteristic example of how much it matters to the nuclear merchants to regulate public perceptions. The exhibit was Conrad Atkinson's photograph of a bus carrying an ad for the Sellafield Exhibition, with his superimposed words 'Welcome to the residues of power'. In the end it stayed in the show, but not in the catalogue.

BNF has often complained about the cost of implementing greater controls; perhaps the goal of spotless PR swallows too much of the Sellafield budget. Certainly image-management is central to the processes of disavowal that condition our experience of nuclear threat, be it to immediate health and safety or planetary survival. We live in a vast military-industrial complex that purports to persuade us there's really nothing there to fear at all, so hermetic is the danger; simultaneously, that danger dominates our economies, our environment and our sense of the future. And the fact that we can't see it induces an even greater powerlessness.

Here, Brecht's much-quoted remark that 'A photograph of the Krupp Works or the AEG tells us next to nothing about these institutions' is singularly inapposite. It's the more mundane evidence of the nuclear industry that remains visible, while the speeding missile and the mushroom cloud exert a hidden hold on collective consciousness. Our nuclear image-repertoire is so restricted to the apocalyptically symbolic that we're forced to bow to the irresistible power behind it. This emerges with great clarity from Robert Del Tredici's project, whose documentary directness can only have been achieved through persistent and no doubt circuitous effort. 'I am aiming to close the gap between our icons and reality in the matter of these weapons by showing the nuclear arsenal at its source — and the people of the bomb on their own terms,' he writes. He's done this by assembling a mass of imagery picturing nuclear production, its workers and its marks on the landscape, those who've suffered from it and those who campaign against it, and even some of those at the apex of the nuclear machine.



'Get your free mushroom cloud here': Del Tredici's 'Test Blast: Official Portrait' (1985)

He has also tracked down several protagonists in the history of nuclear image-making: Berlyn Brixner, official photographer of the Trinity explosion in 1945, whom he probes in detail about the technical problems of his assignment; Yoshito Matsushige, a professional cameraman who recalls the precise circumstances in which he took the only pictures from within Hiroshima on the day of the bomb: five in all, reproduced here.

Both are asked about the mushroom cloud. It hardly features in Brixner's abiding memory of the blast; Matsushige couldn't see it because he was inside it. Elsewhere Del Tredici offers a juxtaposition commenting on the constructed nature of this supreme iconic image that's become resolved in the collective mind's eye; indelibly signifying havoc and death, yet always viewed from afar, with a spectator's perspective — its awesome beauty like a rehearsal for the earth's final sunset. At Minor Scale, a test simulation in the Alamogordo Desert, press weren't allowed to take pictures but were provided with an official photograph. This stage-managed grand spectacle contrasts with Del Tredici's own illicitly snatched version showing just a drifting pall of smoke four minutes later.

Few of his pictures are aesthetically striking in themselves; a well-schooled suspicion has made him shun the cleverly composed shot in favour of a style that proposes the photograph as raw evidence. His portraits, whether of a radiation-diseased uranium miner and his wife, a disaffected scientist or the pilot of Enola Gay, share a straightforward plainness, apparently stating nothing more nor less than that these people exist. Making visible the hidden or unimagined components of the nuclear nightmare is the overriding purpose and much of this evidence is hardly photogenic: the train that carries warheads from Texas to the bases; a disused plutonium factory; an unmarked swamp of radioactive waste in Ontario; reactor after reactor. There's the Moscow hospital where Chernobyl casualties were taken and a workmanlike shot of the two Minuteman missileers who took Del Tredici step by step through a launch demonstration (transcript appended). And there's Sellafield.

Ironically, the camera has been put to work in ways that parallel its conventional military functions, most closely in Del Tredici's mapping of a nuclear aerial topography. He needed PR cooperation — frequently given - to photograph inside nuclear installations, but found that air-space over US armaments plants is zoned no differently from that above civilian industry, and simply rented a plane to record what they look like from above. It's something he couldn't have done in Britain, where the installations are all in air-exclusion zones. Aircraft can't fly over them and, as a man at the Civil Aviation Authority told me when I asked, 'It's extremely unlikely that anyone would ever be given permission to take photographs, except the MOD and the plant's owners.' But then we live in an even more secret state.

Paul Virilio's declaration that 'the apocalypse is here . . . hidden in development itself, in the development of arms — that is, in the non-development of society' comes chillingly confirmed at the end of the book, in the interview with Edward Teller, inventor of the hydrogen bomb and inspiration to Reagan: 'The way out of the present difficulties exists through increased emphasis on defense. I think a peaceful future can be secured only if those who want peace also develop technology to its limits.'

The technology of the nuclear age has permeated modern life; it proceeds at a rate too dizzying to gauge. In the face of this technological speed, that Virilio has called 'the speed of death', all we have is a literal dead reckoning. Del Tredici's uncovering of secrets, his steady

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counting of human costs, together with the inspection of procedures and logistics (which reminded me of Claude Lanzmann's film *Shoah*) points to an exact and necessary strategy. We have to slow down that deadly blur and hold it in our gaze.

TELEVISION

Reach for the moon

Hugo Williams

'EIGHT YEARS on Death Row and time was running out for Edward Earl Jones. As a BBC crew filmed his final days the condemned man told Christopher Hitchens: "I didn't do it".' And an over-excited *Radio Times* blurb-writer wondered where to put the fullstops. Clearly his hypnotic, floating 'As' would have preferred its 'BBC crew' to be part of Johnson's 'Eight years on Death Row', rather than merely **Fourteen Days in May** (BBC1) but unfortunately they only got there two weeks before the end, long after it was too late to get Johnson any help.

'I couldn't afford quality representation,' said Johnson. 'Nine times out of ten we're stuck with an attorney who functions as a kind of extension of the DA.' This was easier to believe than that the case — as presented by this highly emotive documentary — was quite as flimsy as it appeared. The woman who was robbed and nearly raped knew Johnson and said her attacker had been heavier, with a full beard. At the end of the film a caption told us that another woman had come forward to say Johnson was with her in a pool hall all night and been told to go home and mind her own business. Who were these women and why weren't they interviewed? As a re-trial, the programme offered no evidence that wasn't directly aimed at our emotions. Is the pressure on a man with a large, loving family like Johnson's to go on lying greater perhaps than on a confirmed recidivist? The question wasn't asked.

The film had also taken out a special licence to breach the rules of taste in the name of a patently futile campaign to get a last-minute stay and/or further the cause for abolition. We were invited to contemplate intimately, yet superficially, a man who was himself at the end of eight years of self-contemplation: touching, pathetic, yet highly articulate. 'I started to think of all the things I was missing,' he told our man. Then, just as you thought he was going to say 'marriage', or 'children', he said he hadn't seen the moon for eight years. Had his 'confession' to the crime been as original and imaginative as that?

What has been noted everywhere is the way the prison population shared in Johnson's sad fate, but that is only natural for a prison with a Death Row. We have heard less about the obscene details, the entertainment element in this sort of thing, which upright propaganda would seem to legitimise: the man with the vaseline methodically sealing the chamber with his fingers; the test rabbit going berserk; the light banter from the manufacturing reps, dozens of them, about a mosquito bite; the chair itself, so like an ordinary chair, with arm-rests and a head-support, yet different somehow . . . One critic has complimented the director on his decorum in retiring prematurely from the 'Last Night Room' with the words, 'I think we'll leave you now.' But surely this was commercially premeditated? Even the vulture TV wouldn't lay that twitching tit-bit at our feet. One last thing, why were they offered such access in the first place? If one is to take the film at face value, one has to conclude that US law has hit on the ultimate deterrent: executing an innocent man and using a foreign film crew to advertise the fact.

By taking the historical-nostalgic view on 'changing Britain', in particular the fate of the small farmer going under through no fault of his own, **Viewpoint '87: Living On The Edge** (ITV) made a cogent and moving case for more caring and investing government. Macmillan was brought in to pin the collapse of Western capital on the 1974 oil price increase. The film ended with the farmer's heart-breaking elegiac poem to his failed life and a young, unemployed Liverpudlian warning, 'The way it's going, another 20 years and there's gonna be enough people like us running around out there — so they better get ready for us.' At which point he did what he'd been asked not to do and looked me straight in the eye.

Was it cheering news that turned up unexpectedly on **Dispatches** (C4)? Hard to say. It seems the connection between Aids and the HIV virus may not be certain any more and that big money is too heavily invested in vaccine research and testing kits for this to be acknowledged. As well as pointing out that not all Aids sufferers are HIV positive (and vice versa), that a dormant retro-virus cannot cause disease and that most HIV levels are too low to cause infections, the programme came up with a number of wild possibilities which suggest we have yet to throw a six even to start in this game.

There was an echo of the gas chamber in the strange, air-tight sluice-room with its elaborate mechanical throne, the patented 'Pacto-Loo', used by **The Duty Men** (BBC2) at Heathrow Airport to repossess swallowed contraband: 'It's an unpleasant job. One guy wouldn't go to the toilet for ten days. You put on your kit and you get down to it, cutting open the sealed packages and hosing the contents . . . Obviously women have got two areas . . .'

One suspicious-looking customs officer with very long hair saw himself as an artist: 'You ask yourself, "Why has this person travelled?" and you soon get to realise who is a genuine traveller and who isn't'. The concept of genuine as opposed to counterfeit travel is one guaranteed to make phoney-looking tourists of us all.

DANCE

Hype and reality

Stephanie Jordan

Trisha Brown Dance Company
Sadler's Wells
DV8 Physical Theatre
The Place

POSTMODERNISM has become big business in the USA and dance has not been left behind in the race for public recognition. In 1983, when the Brooklyn Academy of Music (BAM) instituted its series of Next Wave Festivals, choreographers like David Gordon, Lucinda Childs and Trisha Brown, veterans of the 1960s anti-illusion-virtuosity-and-emotion brigade, suddenly found themselves being enthusiastically received by a large, new audience. The younger generation were also given their chance. The Festival accrued the clout and glamour to attract considerable private as well as public funding.

Once again, this is the story of hard-selling New York management working on a public and sponsors avid for association with what is new, while tapping the kind of funds unheard of over here. The high profile, big-budget ballet companies have helped by commissioning works from the American avant-garde, a procedure also as yet almost unknown in Britain.

While the American kind of hype carries its obvious dangers, it has meant that **Trisha Brown** now has the name and backing to sell out her Dance Umbrella appearances at Sadler's Wells. Her touring schedule is full and, duly fêted by the subsidy-rich French, she's been offered the luxury of a six-week residency in Angers in which to make her latest work.

It has been suggested that collaborators familiar from the bigger art or music worlds have helped the cause of these postmodern choreographers; with Brown, for instance, there's Robert Rauschenberg on her board of directors, plus Donald Judd and Laurie Anderson. But it seems that they were ready for the move away from their previous minimalist austerity. Brown believes that she had, by this point, assured the strength of her own dance contribution and relished the challenge of 'interesting interferences', theatrical conventions included. And, after all, proscenium theatres are the places that house the biggest audiences.

Yet Brown accepts her new guise with no small irony. One of the most interesting aspects of her work seen at Sadler's Wells was the way in which her minimalist past is still evident. Stage wings are not the usual illusionary barriers. In *Set and Reset*, they are, like Rauschenberg's costumes, transparent, revealing the dancers, billowing in the passing draught. At one point, a girl clamps a cloth between her teeth. Judd's series of monochrome cloths in *Newark* do not merely limit the stage. They descend across it as if to mask dancing that continues behind them or to tease as to who is going to be trapped behind out of sight and who will remain free.

It would be hard not to revel in the delicious grammar of the movement that Brown has been building upon since the late '70s. All three works had it: the scoops, dives and ricochets through bodies and dancers, the ease with which legs fly upwards, the mixture of letting go and directed impulse, instant kinesthetic rapport between dancer and spectator.

But Brown has ways of jolting you out of your 'rapture' (her word) — by suddenly walking through the group with her face in her hands, or by having a man in *Newark* look at one of Judd's drops, beating his forehead with his fists — the real person asking 'What am I doing here? I can't face this.' In *Newark*, too, Brown has returned to the mechanics of motion, the body's joints in flexion and extension or, as the dancers keel over,

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plain unadulterated gravity at work. Here is the tension between group system and individual, illusion and reality — Brown's humour rides through it all.

A less salutary feature of this postmodern boom in the USA is the pressure on younger generation artists to establish quickly a personal style. A blast of virtuosity is the quickest route to immediate appeal and Umbrella has provided a string of such choreographers whose second visits have proved disappointing. One of the sharpest newcomers, Stephen Petronio, was greatly admired last year but, while his new *Simulacrum Reels* has a brilliant surface quality, the merit of its substance is hard to assess. Victoria Marks, over here as our first American choreographer on a Fulbright Arts Fellowship, provided an assortment of short pieces, mostly fluent but unexciting. Perhaps the fellowship will give her time to take stock.

From this country where, in order to get support, pressures are even more acute, the most promising contribution to this year's Umbrella came from **DV8 Physical Theatre**. *My Body, Your Body* stresses the imbalance within male/female relationships: an old theme left undeveloped, yet often compelling as a basis for theatre when taken to such harrowing extremes. The eight women are confined in stilettos, bound around the knees, yet driven to parade for their partners or to transport them sack-like when wearied, all working to the appropriate point of real exhaustion. There is a haunting image of the childlike smallest woman of the company flung over a man's shoulder again and again in a duet part amorous, part jitterbug. Left by her partner for other women, then returned to with increasing violence, she is finally stranded and flailing before a row of emotionless males. Strict, intimidating lines, squads and repetitive patterns preserve a powerful countertension to such physical derangement.

A first version of *My Body* was created in 1986 using students from Leicester Polytechnic. Now, thanks to a Digital Equipment Company Dance Award, it has been reworked. The new piece proves that for groups as self-critical as DV8, under Lloyd Newson's artistic direction, it is essential to spare time and money for research. Sponsors should take note, too, that demand for seats for this comparatively ambitious group was so great that The Place sold out and was able to run an unscheduled sixth performance. □

CINEMA

Riddles of the robot

Judith Williamson

Friendship's Death (15)
Camden Plaza

THE MOST POWERFUL image in *Friendship's Death* is also the most familiar: newsreel of a plane going up in flames on a Jordanian airstrip. 'Pure spectacle', the script reminds us, through the mouth of Bill Paterson playing a British journalist, Sullivan. Sandwiched between two handy slices of such newsreel, the rest of the film, (except the closing sequence) is set in two hotel rooms in 1970 Amman and consists of filmed dialogue between Sullivan and Friendship (Tilda Swinton), a robot designed as a woman and named after the aim of her mission from the galaxy of Procyon.

Friendship was programmed to arrive at the US

COMMENT

LAST THURSDAY, 12 Nov., a bill to reform our copyright laws went before the House of Lords. It has in part been necessitated by the growth of reproduction technologies but the bill does also accommodate an idea new to this country: that of an artist's *moral* rights.

Copyright pure and simple is almost entirely a matter of money. Imagine you're the young Patricia Highsmith, for example, and have just presented a publishing house with the manuscript of your first novel. An editor there believes that it's good, but the few hundred dollars advance she can offer bears no relation to the time and effort that it's taken you to write the book. You accept because a) you have neither the funds nor the know-how to publish yourself and b) because, as an artist, you're forced to behave like a gambler. Since it's totally unlikely that *anyone* will pay you a living hourly rate for your work, you must simply clutch on to your copyright and hope that one day you'll hit the jackpot — as when Alfred Hitchcock announces that he's turning *Strangers on a Train* into a movie.

It isn't absolutely necessary for artists to be entrepreneurs, but, while we have a mixed arts-economy, those copyright laws for which artists have battled can only be considered fair.

The heartaches that artists have with their work are not, however, entirely financial. What Patricia Highsmith thought of Hitchcock's *Strangers on a Train* I don't know, but other novelists have not been amused by film adaptations of their work. When David O. Selznick let Hemingway know that he would be paying him $5,000 from the profits of the film of *A Farewell to Arms*, Hemingway is said to have telegrammed back that if, by some miracle, there *was* any profit, then Selznick should have it changed into nickels 'and shove them up his ass until they come out of his ears'. And artists in all fields suffer from abuses, or perceived abuses, of their work — from photographers who find that the colour of a picture has been changed in the course of reproduction to playwrights whose scripts are made senseless by miscasting.

Which is where 'moral rights' come in. On the Continent and in the USA, this century has seen a strengthening of the notion that — regardless of whether or not they own the copyright to their work — artists should be legally entitled to control the ways in which it is exploited. The concept was first developed in France but, since 1983, has been accepted in the states of New York and California — the first giving emphasis to protecting the *artist's* reputation, the second to protecting the integrity of the *work*.

Our government's bill has the New York approach. If it's turned into law, artists — regardless of their copyright position — will have the following rights: to be identified as the author whenever their work is published commercially, exhibited in public or included in a film or TV programme; *not* to be credited for work that they didn't create, or that has been modified without their consent; to prevent their work being modified (whenever it's published commercially, exhibited in public, etc.) if such modification is unreasonable and prejudices the author's honour and reputation.

Complaints about the bill have focused on its limits. The Arts Council has protested that there are far too many conditions involved; photographers are annoyed that their copyright period is shorter than other artists' . . . But no one appears to have questioned the assumption that artists should actually *have* any moral, as distinct from financial, rights to their work.

I'm not entirely sure how I feel myself. Certainly, I've no argument with credit being given where credit is due, or with safeguarding new and vulnerable artists (power must surely be a factor here) from distortions which misrepresent their work to prospective employers/customers. But the following sentence from Henry Lydiate's pellucid article in *Law Magazine* (2 October) did make my antennae quiver: 'There is a common myth among commercial publishers, reproduction technicians and fine artists alike that it is not an infringement of copyright to take an artist's original image, modify it slightly, and then reproduce without permission.' I'm prepared to go along with his strictures on commercial publishers and reproduction technicians, but, when it comes to 'fine artists' — which means *any* of us when we use a medium creatively, as distinct from purely commercially or recreationally — I can't help feeling that shiver of disquiet.

Since almost all creation involves a response to earlier creations, there are bound to be artists who would like to engage directly with an earlier artist's work — especially if it has acquired any kind of status as a cultural icon. Lydiate sees the new bill as protecting the honour of a future da Vinci, for example, should a future Marcel Duchamp want to scrawl a moustache on a reproduction of the Mona Lisa. But could it not equally well be argued that the bill would imperil the honour of a future Marcel Duchamp? Even under the present law, I know one author whose radical, feminist re-interpretation of a well-known plot is unlikely to see the light of day while the author of the original, who has threatened to make a fuss, still lives.

Isn't there something retentive and sterile about such artistic possessiveness? Isn't Graham Greene's attitude to Hollywood healthier than Ernest Hemingway's, for instance? 'You take the money,' Greene has said, 'you can go on writing. You have no just ground of complaint.' Indeed: the film of Greene's *The Third Man* may well have 'modified' the novel, but it hasn't damaged the author's reputation; nor can it be said in any way to have impoverished our culture.

Harriett Gilbert

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MIT station but having lost contact with her control base finds herself left to her own devices in the Middle East. Initially bemused, Sullivan befriends her and ultimately tries to persuade her to return to England with him. However Friendship, adrift herself, identifies increasingly with the Palestinians and stays to fight their cause. Years later Sullivan, presuming her dead, is left with only the memento of a strange crystal which she has told him contains jottings in image form; his teenage daughter, a scientific genius who bears a strong resemblance to Friendship, finds a way to play her 'notepad' on video and it consists of a jumble of image-memories and what seem to be close-ups of blood cells.

This scenario is adapted from a short story written by director Peter Wollen some years ago. It's an interesting story, because it contains some interesting ideas: less about politics, despite its fashionable location, than about the relation between humans and machines, and the possibility of non-biological life forms. Its details raise intriguing philosophical questions about what it is to be human, and what aspects of humanity machines can replicate.

But there is one question I find unanswerable (except in terms of expedience) and that is why Wollen has chosen to do this as a *film*. There is another, indirectly related, question which is whether the film would merit much attention if Wollen himself were not already well known in the world of independent film, and particularly the world of film theory. I found the film pretty flat, yet have chosen to write about it for the very reason that Wollen *is* an important figure in this world and therefore to some extent represents, as well as influences, it.

Wollen's outstanding contribution to film studies was the book *Signs and Meaning in the Cinema*, published in 1968, which pioneered the application of semiotics to film. Since then he has made, with fellow film theorist Laura Mulvey, a succession of films attempting to put into practice their notions of an anti-mainstream filmmaking: this is his first solo directed feature.

I have discussed elsewhere what I see as some of the problems of the earlier Mulvey-Wollen oeuvre — and films in that tradition: a tendency to construct film by a sort of deconstruction in reverse, and an over-reliance on script to carry the meanings. And the over-scripted quality of many British intellectual films is not coincidental. There is a much stronger literary than visual tradition in this country and — significantly — a great many of the influential figures in the independent film scene come from a background in English (in particular, English at Cambridge).

One of Wollen's key essays in the '70s discussed the 'two avant-gardes' in filmmaking: the aesthetic avant-garde, whose politics are those of form, and the more content-based avant-garde, whose politics are more located in the social realm. *Friendship's Death* is neither of these. Wollen seems to have moved — like so many erstwhile 'avant-garde' filmmakers — from the second category to a pretty conventional use of narrative imagery, while retaining that dominance of the verbal that characterises much of the didactic avant-garde genre.

For the images in *Friendship's Death* seem like mere vehicles for the spoken word, for streams of literary and philosophical aphorisms: 'politics has nothing to do with people, and all to do with maps — a war is the romance of territory' or 'I thought ruins are the past, but now I see that they belong to the present.' The characters given these lines hover uneasily between roundedness — for both Paterson and Swinton are excellent actors — and vehicle-status, since basically they have to be made to say everything Peter Wollen wants to say.

Since the meaning seems almost totally confined to the script, *Friendship's Death* could work as a radio play (or, as it started out, a short story). But since for some reason it has to be a film, the characters have to be filmed talking and stuck in two rooms; the test the film poses itself is how many ways to shoot the two characters in this confined space. But this comes across more like a film school exercise: a scheme devised for some extraneous reason rather than for any reason integral to the film itself. Rather un-modestly, in an interview with the *Monthly Film Bulletin*, Wollen describes this as part of his penchant for 'virtuoso film making', as exemplified by the 360 degree pan in *Riddles of the Sphinx*. But just bunging in fancy shots (like the overhead angles which refer to Hitchcock) isn't enough: virtuoso filmmaking implies at least a kind of energy. Passing over the fact that the female Robot provides a classic art cinema Iconic Woman to look at and that the Palestinians are merely gunmen who occasionally rush across the room — or on second thoughts, inextricably linked with these stereotypes — the key problem with the film is that, like Friendship, it lacks precisely that indefinable quality which gives out warmth, which bleeds, sweats and cannot be entirely programmed — humanity, in short. Or, to put it Bob Dylan's way, its sin is its lifelessness.

ART

Age of professors

John Spurling

The Edwardian Era
Barbican
Age of Chivalry: Art in Plantagenet England 1200-1400
RA

'IT IS QUITE EVIDENT that the spectatorial lust is a most serious factor in imperialism,' wrote J. A. Hobson in 1902. In a corner of **The Edwardian Era** is a small section recalling the mighty Franco-British Exhibition of 1908 which featured, among crowd-pulling fairground novelties and pavilions devoted to cultural displays from the colonial possessions of both empires, three 'villages' — Ceylonese, Senegalese and Irish — with their 'inhabitants' engaged in everyday tasks. Neither *The Edwardian Era* itself nor the even larger historical and social exhibition at the RA, *Age of Chivalry*, attempts to satisfy this sort of 'spectatorial lust'; indeed, they rigorously eschew it in favour of a most serious, educational approach. The only concessions to show business are in their romantic titles, their publicity and, in a restrained way, their decor — hinting respectively at the domestic affluence of the Edwardian upper-classes and the interior of a Gothic cathedral.

Edwardian music-hall performer, Billie Rossiter

No doubt we are soberer, better educated and altogether lovelier people than our imperial ancestors, but the price to be paid is a certain joylessness. It is not that there are not innumerable beautiful, strange and stirrings things to look at, nor that we really need a model Edwardian village or a Plantagenet tourney to divert us, but that where the educational —or, in the case of *The Edwardian Era*, didactic — element is uppermost, everything so lovingly and expensively assembled to be seen as and for itself is subtly devalued. Art is subsumed into history and sociology, the visual into its intellectual exposition. The hearts of both these exhibitions are their accompanying books (*The Edwardian Era*, Phaidon/Barbican, £12.95 and *Age of Chivalry*, RA/Weidenfeld, £16), packed with explanatory essays by many scholarly hands.

Indeed *The Edwardian Era* is a book with a show attached. Its explicit purpose is to strip away the glamour that still vaguely attaches to the decade after Victoria's death and demonstrate that, not surprisingly, those people had problems. The book wastes little time on the glamour, but plunges vigorously and often informatively into the problems: health, family life, sex, imperialism, feminism, armaments, urban decay, beginnings of the Labour Party, to name but a few. The show, after a brief and ironic facade of glamorous images — state portraits of King Edward, Queen Alexandra and cousin Kaiser Wilhelm, portraits and affluent interiors by Sargent, Nicholson and Lavery — follows less trenchantly behind with a mass of photographic documentation and curiosities — a replica of Bleriot's aeroplane, an

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ancient bicycle, political posters and cartoons, Trades Union banners, designs for the new garden suburbs of Letchworth and Hampstead, seaside postcards, theatre programmes, etc. It's even possible that visitors to the show will enjoy it for entirely the wrong reason — out of nostalgia for yesterday's ephemera rather than the burning sense of old wrongs still imperfectly righted that animates the organisers.

Age of Chivalry may have an underlying nationalistic purpose — to prove that the English, in the days when they were only just becoming the English, valued and practised the visual arts to a standard they've only intermittently achieved since — but it's more concerned with imparting information than either endorsing or correcting an image of the 13th and 14th centuries. The chivalrous pretences of the Plantagenets and their subjects are much less dwelt upon than their social, religious and political systems.

For the specialists this is clearly a great event, a bringing together of important evidence from all the arts in England in the so-called Gothic period, a third instalment of the process of inter-disciplinary scholarship begun in the BM's Anglo-Saxon and the Hayward's English Romanesque exhibitions three years ago. For the rest of us the exhibition's layout, its laudable desire to reconstruct a lost world and put every item in context is more of a distraction than a help. In fact there are two parallel layouts: one by theme (Kingship, Pilgrimage, Orders of Society), the other by reigns (Henry III, the three Edwards and Richard II), both of which require their own elucidation quite separately from the individual artefacts that go to make up the layouts. The result is that the objects, so fragmentary and disparate — pottery, ivories, textiles, monumental brasses, ironwork, woodwork, sculpture, illuminated manuscripts, paintings, silver, jewellery, coins, seals, photographs of architecture — come to seem more like the ephemera of a reign than individual achievements; and the decayed battle-dress of the Black Prince, for example, or an original copy of Magna Carta no different in kind from an exquisite stone angel from Derbyshire or a brilliantly animated misericord of a knight being pitched off his violently twisting horse.

Since most of the arts went through a distinct change of style from the 13th to the 14th centuries, it might have been better to adopt a simpler — dual rather than multiple-frame-work. Nevertheless, perhaps as a concession to the fact that the RA is after all a place for artists rather than for kings and national history, there is a room devoted to 'mediaeval artists and their techniques'. The contents are sparse — a few tools, pens, a 13th-century paper-clip, an oyster-shell palate, a carving of a master carver at work, evidence of motifs being re-used in different parts of the country — but at least they serve to focus attention on the real if mostly anonymous heroes of this magisterial but too professorial display.

For another view of The Age of Chivalry *read Jules Lubbock in next week's* NS.

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Books

SOUTH AFRICA

Freedom fighters

Suzanne Cronje

Escape from Pretoria
TIM JENKINS *Kliptown Books* £5
My Fight against Apartheid
MICHAEL DINGAKE *Kliptown Books* £5

IT IS ALWAYS satisfying to read about evil being outwitted by good, but particularly when the evil is apartheid and the good — well, the goodish — three members of the ANC who managed to escape from a South African security prison. Tim Jenkins' account of how he and his colleagues did it, apparently against all odds, is an incredible adventure story, every bit as exciting as its WWII counterpart, *The Wooden Horse*.

Jenkins, Alex Moumbaris and Stephen Lee were in a small group of white political prisoners, including such well known figures as David Kitson, Denis Goldberg and Dave Rabkin, who were serving long terms in Pretoria's top security jail. **Escape from Pretoria** details the meticulous planning of the escape, the rehearsals when discovery would have meant reprisals against the whole group and, finally, the journey to freedom in December 1979. The means to escape were wooden keys manufactured by Jenkins and Moumbaris under the eyes of their jailers.

Jenkins and Lee landed in jail for distributing ANC propaganda through leaflet bombs, and Jenkins gives a brief account of how he became disillusioned with apartheid and joined the ANC. It was the ANC discipline in prison which kept up morale and made it possible for the three to escape. But there were tensions in the group, some admitted in the book and some implied, about the personal and political consequences of the enterprise. 'There was a belief among the comrades that being a political prisoner was not a complete waste of time. Political imprisonment served a purpose: it inspired others and kept alive the notion that there were fighters against apartheid who had sacrificed their personal freedom for the greater freedom of the oppressed. I never subscribed to this theory . . . we'd got into prison through being inspired by political motives, so no one could claim that our motives to get out were entirely personal.'

Jenkins is defensive about his desire to escape because it overrode everything else in his mind almost from the moment of his arrest; for instance, he did not insist on making a political statement at his trial because 'our desire to escape left us insufficiently motivated to press the point'. Curiously enough, he attributes his fixation on escape to the book *Papillon*, which he and Lee read while awaiting trial. *Papillon*, which describes how its author, Henri Charriere, got away from Devil's Island, convinced Jenkins that 'no escape will be successful if it is approached in a half-hearted manner or *if you place it below other objectives*'. This must have given rise to some soul-searching when he regained his freedom and returned to the ANC.

He writes well and often with humour about prison life. Besides this, his illustrated account of how to master locks should make the book required reading for any would-be jail breaker.

The second part of Michael Dingake's **My Fight Against Apartheid** is also concerned with South African prison life — this time on Robben Island, together with ANC leaders Nelson 'Madiba' Mandela, Walter 'Tyopo' Sisulu, Govan 'Zizi' Mbeki, Billy 'Monna' Nair and other ANC leaders. Dingake refers to the Jenkins trio's escape, news of which filtered through to Robben Island: 'a supreme feat . . . in our section we toasted it with mugs of coffee.'

Dingake's autobiography gives a profound insight not only into the nature of resistance in South Africa but into life, loyalties, religion and crime in the black townships. Born in Botswana and educated in South Africa, Dingake joined the ANC, was kidnapped in Ian Smith's Rhodesia with the connivance of the British South Africa Police and handed over to the apartheid police to be tortured and imprisoned. Dingake brings to life the painful circumstances under which the middle-class, respectable ANC became a revolutionary movement. He also gives a rare account of some of the men who sold out to the police, suggesting who betrayed the Rivonia trialists — so called after the farm from which members of the ANC operated after it was banned in 1960 — including Mandela and Goldberg, who was serving his sentence in the Pretoria prison from which Jenkins escaped.

Current press speculation about Mandela and Mbeki has led to some bizarre suggestions about 'deals' being struck to secure their release. Nobody who has read Dingake's book is likely to be taken in by such wishful or mischievous thinking.

KENYA

L'Etat, c'est Moi

Stephen Howe

Kenya's Freedom Struggle: the Dedan Kimathi Papers
MAINA WA KINYATTI *Zed* £19.95 & £6.95
Economic and Social Origins of Mau Mau
DAVID W THROUP *James Currey* £25 & £9.95

THE MAU MAU revolt in colonial Kenya was, if not the bloodiest, certainly among the most traumatic episodes in Britain's retreat from Empire. Of all the 'little wars' that flared along the shrinking colonial frontier, perhaps only those in Palestine and Ireland aroused deeper passions within Britain itself.

A hysterical press chorus describing supposed rebel atrocities, obscene oathing ceremonies, barbaric African bloodlust, echoed the racial mythology of Kenyan settlers — and has been

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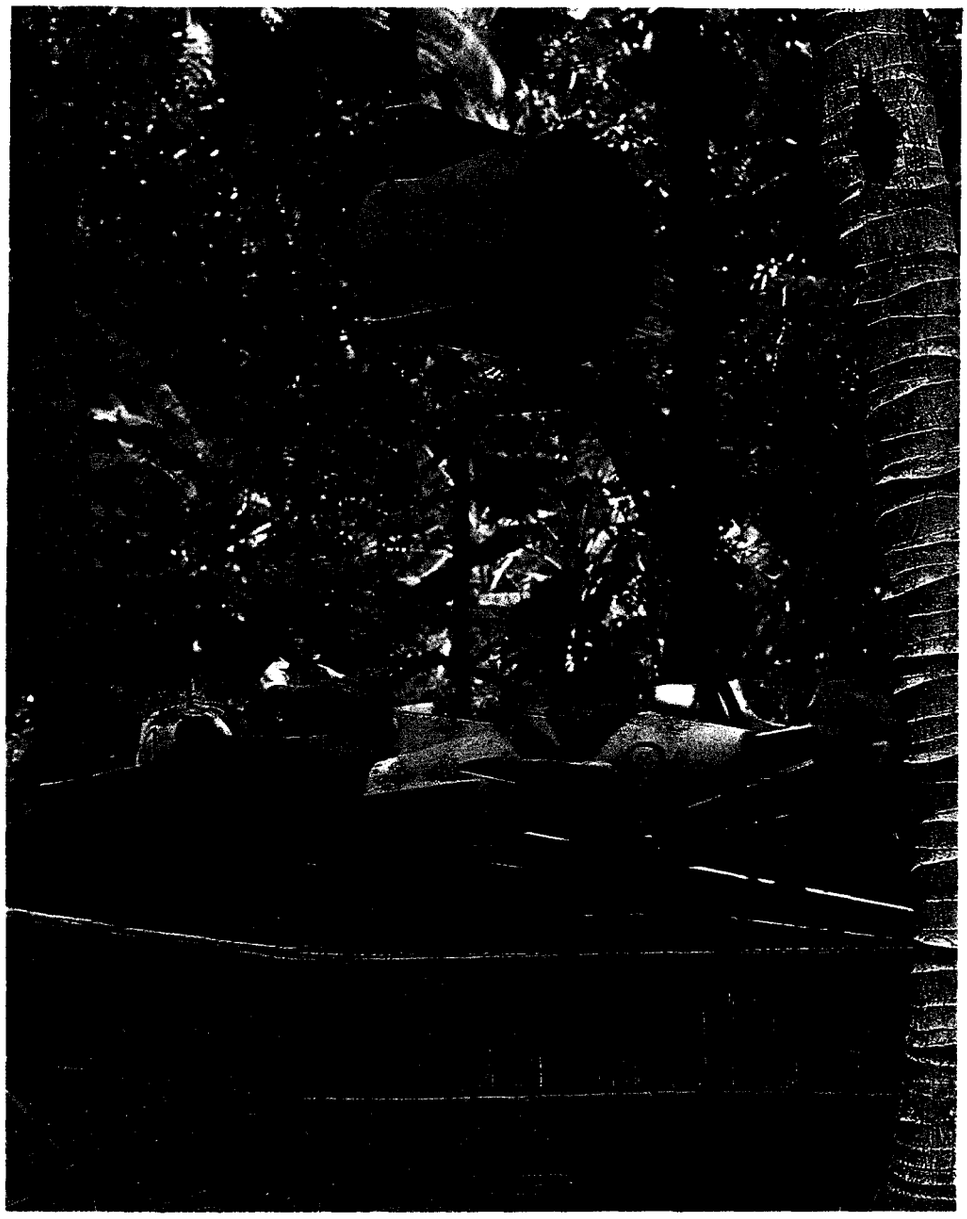

When Tim Page returned to Vietnam for the tenth anniversary of the liberation, his special pass billed him as a 'progressive radical photographic artist'. Convenience terms, no doubt, for easy passage through the bureaucracy. Open eyed and open hearted would be better epithets, if TEN YEARS AFTER: VIETNAM TODAY (Thames & Hudson, £15.95) is anything to go by: a sanguine collection of images from a battered country now living in some semblance of domestic peace. Page's mysticism and his taste for the extreme have never quite got the better of him, although he must have worried his friends at times. In *Dispatches*, Michael Herr recalls him recovering from a critical injury and dismissing an idea for a book that could 'take the glamour out of war'. 'How the hell can you do that?' asked Page. It was like trying to take the glamour out of sex, he argued, or the Rolling Stones. But that is the strength of this new book. Nearly 20 years on, Tim Page has none of the war hack's seedy ennui in the presence of peace. Each image seems to endorse the dream of reconstruction in Vietnam, like an effort of will nudging it forward. Yet the memory of the devastation is never far away. This tension of past and future is best evoked by a photo of three Vietnamese trudging past a wrecked M40 tank in a field near Dong Hoi. To the untrained eye, it might have been taken 15 years ago. Yet the mood has changed and a crown of young foliage is sprouting from the top of an otherwise haggard tree. For Page, one suspects, shots like that — and the one above, of a carousel made from war scrap — work as a kind of exorcism. They could well do the same for anyone who glimpsed that war in a TV documentary or a photospread at the time. (Jeremy Harding)

perpetuated in the still depressingly popular fictions of Robert Ruark. British socialists like Fenner Brockway who dared suggest that real grievances might underlie the revolt, met with incomprehension, outrage, even death threats. As revelations of the brutality with which the security forces suppressed Mau Mau leaked, however, even so unlikely a figure as Enoch Powell joined in condemnation. Even the highly suspect official casualty figures hint at the extent of that brutality. The 'terrorists', on these figures, killed 1,819 Africans — and just 32 European civilians. The British killed 11,503 'in action', many if not most in summary executions, plus 1,015 judicial killings — the majority for mere possession of arms or illegal oathing. The resulting furore clearly hastened decolonisation not only in Kenya but elsewhere in Africa.

Thirty years on, the bitterness of the dispute over the Kenyan Emergency is a dim memory in Britain. Instead, there is a growing body of impressive historical writing on late colonial Kenya, emanating especially from Cambridge. From David Anderson, Michael Cowen, Gavin Kitching, John Lonsdale and now, triumphantly, David Throup, we probably have more and better studies of postwar Kenya than of any other African country. Commentary on Mau Mau has moved from the debating chamber and the gutter press to the calm of the seminar room.

Not so in Kenya. There, the legacy of Mau Mau is as emotionally charged and politically sensitive as any subject could be. For radical critics of President Daniel Moi's shaky, increasingly harsh regime, the forest fighters of the Emergency are the prime rallying point, the banner raised against neo-colonialism, the symbol of the betrayed hopes of Independence. Exiled novelist Ngugi wa Thiong'o threatens Kenya's rulers that 'Mau Mau is coming back'. Evidently they do not think the threat idle. Historian Maina wa Kinyatti, who has depicted Mau Mau as the true spirit of Kenyan nationalism, the rebels as those who suffered for an Independence whose fruits were stolen by others, has been imprisoned, his writings suppressed. He remains behind bars as his collection of guerrilla leader Dedan Kimathi's papers is published in Britain.

Kinyatti's 'Marxised' Mau Mau is undoubtedly a semi-mythic creation: he greatly overrates its organisational and ideological coherence, glosses over the elements of social banditry and Kikuyu chauvinism in the movement, attributes to it a sophisticated critique of neo-colonialism which seems largely his own imagining. This, of course, must in no way dull concern or mute protest at his persecution; but surely neither the cause of social justice in Kenya nor the elimination of racist colonial images of the past is best served by the creation of mirror image counter-myths.

For Throup, as for Kinyatti, the story of postwar Kenya is a tragedy — but his plot is very different. Kinyatti and Ngugi lament the alliance forged between colonial rulers and a proto-capitalist African successor elite. Throup's argument is that the alliance came a decade too late, after enormous and unnecessary suffering. Blinded by settler prejudices against even the most moderate African politicians, committed to a misconceived strategy of agrarian modernisation which thwarted aspiring African entrepreneurs, saddled with an ageing, out-of-touch but still fiercely ambitious Governor, the British administration refused to see that Jomo Kenyatta and the infant African bourgeoisie were less subversive threats than potential partners. Meanwhile both the unemployed, often criminalised slumdwellers of 'outcast Nairobi', and the land-hungry squatters of rural Kikuyuland were driven to violence by the mounting pressures of colonial economic policy. After months of ignoring the warning signs of African discontent, the colonial state precipitately declared an Emergency.

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Designed to avert an eruption of violence, the Emergency unleashed one. Mass arrests and rigged trials supposed to neutralise the 'managers' of Mau Mau instead removed those who might have managed to contain it. The parallels with South Africa in the 1980s, though inexact, are close enough to be disturbing. The strategists of apartheid, it has long been known, learnt much from Kenya about the techniques of counter-insurgency. They seem to have learnt nothing about averting wholly predictable tragedy. □

ART & SOCIETY

That'll larn 'em

Boyd Tonkin

Civilising Caliban: The Misuse of Art, 1875-1980
FRANCES BORZELLO *Routledge* £15.95

THIRTY YEARS AFTER Raymond Williams published *Culture and Society*, its ways of speaking about the intersection of art and ideology still thrive. If Williams fails to appear in the index to *Civilising Caliban*, it's probably because British cultural historians have made his pioneering modes of thought their own.

After the semiological detours of the last decade, Borzello's study of the use of art exhibitions as a social bromide feels almost cosy. It sports a pompous Establishment — whether Victorian clergy or the post-war Arts Council — in combat with a perpetually defeated Opposition that stretches from William Morris to the community artists of the 1970s. One side foists pictorial sweetness and light on the masses as part of a mission to elevate them out of drink, sin or socialism. The other aims to plant the means of cultural production firmly in the hands of the people. Borzello draws the past and present in strict monochrome tints: élitists to the right, populists to the left, and never the twain shall meet. This dualistic schema won't begin to explain the mesh of influences, learned and folkloric, on view in the current Diego Rivera exhibition at the Hayward.

As a contribution to today's debates about the social function of culture, *Civilising Caliban* does little more than shovel earth on top of barricades first raised long ago.

Its historical narrative is more solid and enjoyable. Borzello focuses on the aesthetic philanthropy of the Rev. Samuel and Henrietta Barnett, who mounted annual shows of loaned paintings in Whitechapel from 1881. Their initiative spawned imitators elsewhere in London, even in New York and Chicago, over the following 20 years. 'Pictures for the poor' gradually faded from the scene as the pace of change in both politics and the visual arts quickened.

Civilising Caliban argues that the unequal contest between Morrisites and academicians dates from the Barnetts' deployment of art as a pacifier for the East End rookeries: 'not only were the battle lines drawn up in the 1880s, but the outcome was decided.' From that moment on, cultural mandarins would plan to quell the underclass with dollops of beauty. The Tate will soon open its northern outpost in the Liverpool docks.

As Borzello's extracts from reports, speeches and the press make plain, Barnett and his ilk seldom fudged their motives. Ruskin's doctrine of art as an echo of faith in a secular age fused with the public gallery movement that saw exposure to art and design as a source of both practical education and moral reform. Pictures could help keep the plebs off the streets and out of the alehouses. By observing great works the poor might grow 'religious, clean, refined, sensitive, politically conservative and able to pass the doors of public houses without going inside'. All very droll, no doubt. But the book's argument refuses to notice that later agitprop merchants merely switched the polarities of this belief. They failed to challenge the degradingly instrumental idea of culture it implies. Barnett's East End descendants may have yearned to produce radicals and activists able to pass the doors of an Asda superstore without going inside. Yet the hypodermic model of spectatorship remains intact: give the punters a fix and wait for the truth to dawn in their benighted brains.

In the Whitechapel shows and their offspring, pre-Impressionist values prevailed. Every picture had to tell a story. Moralities and genre-pieces abounded; among the paintings lent, figures such as Watts and Burne-Jones made up the vanguard. Reading the catalogues, the respectable poor were dosed with arm-twisting interpretations that relentlessly subjected paint to print.

By 1901, the Whitechapel Gallery had opened as a permanent monument to the uplift peddled by the Barnetts and their well-born fans. 'Outreach' curating became a professional skill, while socialism and aestheticism between them broke the truce that had fostered the East End exhibitions.

In a short book written with a flair for tart epigrams, Frances Borzello can't hope to prove her case beyond dispute. By seizing on the Whitechapel displays as a microcosm of dominant attitudes she substitutes a symbol for sustained analysis. Hence *Civilising Caliban* tails off into tired sniping at Roy Shaw and Lord Goodman, coupled with gestures of solidarity towards splendid but sadly nameless community artists.

Complicating factors simply vanish: for instance, the Arts Council's patronage of an avant-garde already ratified by the commercial gallery system but still very far from the 'easel art' the Council supposedly defends. Just a few moments' thought about the disturbing presence of demotic imagery in the work of the fêted EastEnders Gilbert and George serves to show how muddied the waters have become.

In today's E1, populism and plutocracy join in a postmodern handshake beyond the ken of the Barnetts and, it seems, their chronicler. Frances Borzello charts her chosen episodes wittily and well, but in trying to set up the Whitechapel mentality as a paradigm of official art in the 1980s she leaves too much out of the frame. □

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Death wish

Hilary Bichovsky

FIRST THINGS first. Are you looking for a book to make you want to get out of bed in the mornings? How about **Red Alert** by Judith Cook (Hodder, £3.50), a complete history of accidents, incompetence and deception in the nuclear power and weapons industry. I only had to read once about the death of Richard Makinley to realise that the moving spirit behind this industry is Thanatos. In 1961, he was impaled on a nuclear fuel rod and stuck to the ceiling of a reactor core, at Idaho Falls, USA; his body was then cut up by surgeons working with tools at the end of poles, and the separated portions of it were buried in lead-lined caskets as nuclear waste. 'The safest form of energy known to man', says Peter Walker. I can feel my sense of humour draining, as if permanently, out of the soles of my feet.

Continuing apocalyptically, **The Life Story of St Theresa of Avila by Herself** (Penguin, £4.95) is a sombre story. St Theresa endured what to us seems like a life of torturous psychological ill-health; for instance, she hated herself entirely and saw this as a condition of godliness, but as she grew older was given to frequent and stirring divine visions, hell included. Her account of meditation is particularly clear. The book is hard-going in places, appropriate for a tract on asceticism, but offers close insight into the mental world of this supremely anti-feminist mystic (she saw her female body as an added trial from God), who sincerely longed to be dead at a time when such ambitions were respected and well within definitions of sanity.

Current models of sanity are better represented by someone like Bryan Gould MP, sensible person and author of **Socialism and Freedom** (Macmillan, £8.95). His theory of socialism revolves around the formula that maximum individual wealth assures maximum average wealth; his style is plodding. One statement had me really puzzled: 'A poor man might be able to buy a Rolls-Royce by sacrificing all other economic objectives but it could not be claimed on this basis that he enjoys the same freedom to buy a Rolls-Royce as a millionaire does.' Quite. I wonder what Bryan Gould understands by 'poor'? The quote gives you an idea of the flavour of the book — Philosophy with a capital P complete with ridiculous examples and a hint of maths to make it look scientific. He should learn that politics without passion is passé; thanks, especially, to feminism, emotionless theoreticians will tend to be distrusted more and more. I think what Bryan Gould wants is a Rolls-Royce. At the end of the book the 'man' in the street, who has starred throughout in shining sexual neutrality, gains a wife. This is always a bit of a giveaway.

If you want something *good* to read about socialism I recommend Anthony Wright's **Socialism: Why Socialists Disagree and What They Disagree About** (Oxford, £4.95). Reading this is like discussing the crisis of the left with someone who knows what they're talking about, instead of your friends. The author writes with the usual understated omniscience of an academic. His account attempts to examine the splits, fragmentations and factions that have represented socialism from the mid-19th century till now (utopians, Marxists, Fabians, etc.). The point of his book is not to paste over contradictions but look them in the face and consider, for example, what are the implications for the name 'socialist' of the unsavoury state totalitarian regimes which have been known to call themselves that. His analysis is well worth reading.

Finally two slim volumes of fiction. **Olivia** by Olivia (Virago, £2.95) is a camp exposition of rampant school-girl lesbianity laced with Great Poets in the original Italian and French which I couldn't understand. Olivia is a pseudonym for Dorothy Strachey and the thrill is that the tale is thinly disguised autobiography and an ode to a real woman, Marie Souvestre. It is easy to dismiss this book on the grounds that its life-breath is Snobbery and a religious awe of Great Art, but if you can swallow that, within those rarefied bounds, it is a heartbreaking story. I think Oscar Wilde would have liked it. In an afterword Susannah Clapp suggests the story is a disguised love letter to Gide who Dorothy Strachey was apparently quite keen on and to whom she sent the manuscript. Well, Strachey may later have loved Gide but *Olivia* is a lesbian love-story and no thanks are due Susannah Clapp for a classic attempt to render this obvious truth invisible.

Incidents At The Shrine (Fontana, £3.50) is a collection of short stories by the Nigerian writer Ben Okri. The title story is about the power and methods of magic and how Anderson, who lives in the city, can finally only survive his illness and bad luck by visiting his village and submitting himself to the administrations of The Image Maker, who says cryptically to him: 'The world is the shrine and the shrine is the world. Everything must have a centre. When you talk rubbish bad things fly into your mouth.' The Image Maker later removes a small collection of objects that had infiltrated Anderson's body, by biting into his shoulder. This and other events are not demystified by Okri but neither does he suggest they are not surprising. Okri's writing is innocent and angry, sparse and subtle. These are beautiful stories, but they bite. □

HISTORY

Twilight hour

Catherine Hall

The Age of Empire 1875-1914
E. J. HOBSBAWM *Weidenfeld* £16.95

IN THE SUMMER of 1913 the 18-year-old daughter of a middle-class Austro-Hungarian Jewish family went to visit her Uncle Albert, a successful retailer, in Egypt.

While there she met a young man, probably at the Sporting Club, the son of a Polish Jewish cabinet maker who had migrated to England in the 1870s. This young man was working in one of the shipping offices of Alexandria while one of his brothers was a small-time representative of the British Empire, serving in the Egyptian Post and Telegraph Service in the Nile Delta. The young couple found themselves in a shared colonial culture. The imperial frontiers crossed the barriers of class and ethnicity and they subsequently married. Their son was Eric Hobsbawm. They owed their meeting to the Age of Empire, that *belle époque* from 1875-1914 when the world that mattered was still centred on Europe, before the storm clouds had fully gathered and the lights went out.

The Age of Empire is the third volume in Hobsbawm's magisterial trilogy which interprets the 19th century as the epoch of the triumph of capitalism and the rise and fall of the liberal bourgeoisie. *The Age of Revolution* from 1789-1848 saw the rise of a new system of industrial capitalism and the American and French revolutions which established the models for bourgeois society. *The Age of Capital* from 1848-1875 saw the capitalist conquest of the globe, the collapse of traditional regimes and the hegemony of the liberal bourgeoisie. *The Age of Empire* is the twilight of the century, dominated by the contradictions of capitalist development when the ever more glittering world of the bourgeoisie was destabilised by the nightmares of Dangerfield's *Strange Death of Liberal England*. In the case of Britain the Irish Question and organised workers, together with the 'new woman', combined to undercut the very heartlands of imperial patriarchal power. Those heartlands were saved only by the outbreak of war and the onset of patriotism.

The architecture of the book conforms to a classical Marxism. The starting point of the new era is the economic change of gear in the wake of the fall in the rate of profit of the 1870s, the so-called 'Great Depression'. Top-hatted capitalists started to abandon the old-style family firm and move towards economic concentration, scientific management and the development of a new mass market. Following Lenin, Hobsbawm argues that the new imperialism had its roots in a specific new phase of capitalism. New relations of production meant new forms of class politics, a new industrial proletariat and a fully fledged liberal bourgeoisie.

But the emergence of 'the people' in the late 19th century and the reluctant but inevitable recognition of their right to be a part of the democratic nation meant the development of new political forms. Thus the creation of the nation, with its distinctive rituals and national anthems, is understood as part of the effort by existing powers to hold the loyalty and subordination of the masses while the imperial idea provided another form of powerful ideological cement. In the 1890s socialism emerged as a mass working-class movement but, in the period before 1917, Hobsbawm argues, the liberal bourgeoisie managed this without a serious undermining of their values and historic expectations.

It was not only class relations and politics that were transformed by this new epoch. Artistic and intellectual life were also shaken to the core and, in three chapters dazzling in their range, Hobsbawm traces the crisis of modernism, the break in scientific thinking and the critique of reason. The bourgeois world may have survived but it was locked in contradictions, contradictions that were to explode in the extraordinary wave of imperial breakdowns from 1900-1914 and the outbreak of war. The central preoccupation for the historian, as Hobsbawm writes, must be 'to understand and

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to show how the era of peace, of confident bourgeois civilisation, growing wealth and western empires inevitably carried within itself the embryo of the era of war, revolution and crisis which put an end to it'.

But the classical Marxism which underpins *The Age of Empire* is not as classical as it once was. Those New Statespersons who might have constructed Eric Hobsbawm as a hardline economic determinist in the past must re-think their categories. Gone are the days when class was conceptualised in exclusively economic terms. The bourgeoisie of *The Age of Empire* sharpen their consciousness of themselves as a class on the golf course and tennis court. They recognise each other through their shared class-specific culture rather than their shared relations of production. Workers of the world are similarly united through the shared symbol of the cloth cap. Furthermore, women finally appear on the historical scene in this age, having merited no attention in either of the previous volumes.

Unfortunately, the women appear in the form of a separate chapter — though in the middle rather than at the end of the book — while men march through the rest, conquering empires, making revolutions, re-conceptualising the world.

While Hobsbawm's intellectual range is formidable, his grasp of the feminist literature of the last 20 years is very thin and he is still far from conceptualising gender as a primary social axis.

'For better or worse,' writes Hobsbawm at the end of the book, 'since 1914 the century of the bourgeoisie belongs to history.' The provocative question this raises is what are the class characteristics of the epoch we now inhabit? Is it so fundamentally different? The liberal bourgeoisie in one historically specific form may be finished but the economic system which gave rise to it, despite the crash of '87 and the prospects of recession, is still firmly in place. By 1914 monopoly capitalism was underway and the great powers had divided the world into metropolis and periphery, independent and dependent, civilised and requiring civilisation. This particular territorial carve-up was destroyed by Versailles and the Russian Revolution but the organising principles of late capitalism and of first and third worlds have remained.

The question then still stands. If the bourgeoisie is no longer the dominant class, who is? If it is no longer 'liberal', what is it? What Age are we now living in? □

FANTASY

The age of Aquarius

Colin Greenland

ARLEN AND CERILLA, Winterking and queen of the Sacred Isle, escape their ritual doom when a chum of Arlen's sportingly offers to stand in for him at the execution.

The scapegoat's ghost, however, is vengeful and jealous of the couple's bliss. It pursues them and possesses their baby son, who must be rejected and redeemed by Cerilla before they can all know peace. Nancy Springer has written a myth of motherhood that's throbbing with archetypes: the hanged god; forbidden fruit; the abandoned baby set afloat in his cradle; the brown man that lives under the hill; and a Babylonian type of mother-goddess with gilded nipples and a serpent on her head.

For all the Oedipal unpleasantness of the material, Springer embraces it wholeheartedly. Her synthesis is seamless, her style smooth but rapt. Men struggle, women are staunch; suffering is requited: 'It is also in the pattern, the ancient pattern.'

Celtic in its melancholy, its conviction of doom, its yearning for completeness, **Chains of Gold** (Macdonald, £10.95), like all good bardic incantations, has a chorus you can join in with ('Bound as by a chain of gold'), linked antistrophically with imagery of snakes. It is an accomplished tale of love and sacrifice for those who are thrilled by such things.

While Springer deploys folklore motifs in a rhetoric of superhuman emotions, C.J. Cherryh does something I find more congenial, less dependent on an unreflective submission to myth as a source of value. **The Dreamstone** (Gollancz, £2.50) centres the human, presenting us as beset, allured, distracted by myths. There is a wood at the end of the fields, and there lives the Queen of Elfland. Myths codify options; myths delimit the known, sometimes with violence. 'She is waked, waked, waked! and the harp of Kings is broken.'

Of course this is Celtic too, this losing of hearts (and lives) to the fairy queen; but Celtic fairies are warriors, and Arafel is, ultimately, a warrior queen, as well as being the loneliest woman in the world. The domesticity she disturbs is not mystified, as in *Chains of Gold*, but a cultural practice, an element of a system: of feudal patriarchy, specifically, for it is the Age of Men.

There are two stories here, one about a magic prelapsarian farm that lies hidden from all the world except the occasional wounded pilgrim blessed to stumble into its yard. Beorc's Steading is a sort of wonderful self-sufficient ashram where it is impossible to live if you're burdened with any sense of history or wider social responsibility. This tale is cunningly nested inside the other, the one about the lady in the wood. Between temptations and necessities, fields of corn and fields of battle, Cherryh's characters are human in scale and subjectivity, complex and mutable, not always noble, not always petty. Nevertheless, *The Dreamstone* ends with a triumph for romance that seems required more by American book marketing than by the fiction itself.

In **Ægypt** (Gollancz, £11.95) John Crowley's characters are, as usual, Justified Hippies of Massachusetts. By a combination of benevolent optimism, inherited wealth and inattention, they have survived into the mid-'70s, baking, potting, parenting and sharing in a little out-of-the-way town called Blackbury Jambs. The whimsy ends there, and the story of another mild, vague young man begins, an idealistic, bookish, sexy young man who is beginning to look like an authorial self-portrait.

Like Crowley's last novel *Little, Big, Ægypt* is a magical almanac, a gentle chronicle constructed around improbable metaphysical systems, spheres and orders, this time populated by angels rather than fairies. Obsessed by history as story, it is involved in metafictional relations with a non-existent period romance by an imaginary famous novelist, in which the itinerant professional heretic Giordano Bruno encounters the English astrologer royal, Dr John Dee. *Ægypt* is disarmingly intelligent (but sometimes patronising), sensitive and evocative (but sometimes gushing). It is not *Ægypt* at all, anyway, but only the first quarter of *Ægypt*, consisting of two prologues and a book called 'The Solitudes', in three sections that correspond to the first quaternary of a horoscope. This volume took five years to write. I hope the others materialise more rapidly. I want them now.

In (and out of) progress since 1971, and featuring Farrell, hero of a story from 1969, Peter S. Beagle's comeback novel **The Folk of the Air** (Headline, £4.95) is also somewhat concerned with old hippies. The protraction has not been good for it. Though this book has much of Beagle's former lyrical expansiveness and wry, lugubrious caricature in sidelights, it mostly lacks the mordant Jewish irony that, in *A Fine and Private Place* especially, co-ordinated the various purples of the prose. The titular Folk are a group of Californian Creative Anachronists, who put on mediaeval dress, talk like Robin Hood movies, and hold banquets, jousts, wars and so on. Initially scornful, Farrell, a rootless lutenist, rapidly becomes assimilated to their fraternity, just as it is taken over by a teenage witch and her brat demon boyfriend. Luckily Farrell's landlady is a retired goddess.

Beagle acknowledges the perversity of the League for Archaic Pleasures, the insecurity beneath the helms and wimples, but he so much wants it to be all right he allows their army to repulse a surprise attack by five real medieval mercenaries conjured through time, and lose only one man.

It's hard to tell whether this leniency, this new mellowness in the face of the preposterous, is because Beagle approves of these people or because he believes many of his old readers may now *be* these people. □

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Come back C. P. Snow

Alan Cock, Southampton,
Hilary Rose (*NS* 6 Nov.) sounds a trumpet-blast from the Apocalyptic Tendency that has infiltrated feminism. She seems to be suffering from over-exposure to the heady fumes of utopian and science-fiction writings. A spell with her nose buried in more mundane matters might be a good antidote.

For a piece purporting to address the threat to our future, the literary bias is overwhelming — C. P. Snow, thou should'st be living at this hour! The threats come, not from utopian fantasies, but from people (of both sexes) in politics, business and technocracy who, for the most part, have only an indirect acquaintance with science, and regard it as just a tool in their own power-struggles.

According to Rose, 'the libertarian socialists' have nothing to offer women. It isn't wholly clear whether she intended this assertion to be restricted to utopian writers, but what does she make of John Stuart Mill? His *Subjection of Women* was, in my view, the best (most effective) feminist tract of the 19th century. Mill practised as well as preached sexual equality: by setting up house with Harriet Taylor and her daughter, and, as MP for Westminster, by introducing the first-ever Bill for female suffrage.

Coming of Age in Samoa is just one aspect of the Margaret Mead story. It is very pertinent that her third husband, Gregory Bateson, came from a strongly feminist family (the marriage lasted 14 years — not bad going in the circumstances). From Gregory's paternal grandparents onwards, every Bateson of either sex (all, at least, that I have substantial knowledge of) was active in one feminist cause or another.

Rose's disparaging reference to J. B. S. Haldane and others as having a 'sunny hope of cloning lots of little Lenins' might lead some readers to suppose that Haldane was some kind of male chauvinist ogre. In the context of his life and work (inside and outside science), that is a grotesque calumny. It is, anyway, an error to say that *Brave New World* was written to 'refute' Haldane's *Daedalus*. They are simply two different speculative projections: refutation does not enter into it.

Most serious of all, female chauvinism oozes from between the lines of nearly every paragraph. Nowhere does a single male get even a slight nod of approval. Female chauvinism bids fair to become a very serious obstacle to genuine feminist aims (which I take to be equality of status and opportunity, and generally even-handed relations between the sexes). Male chauvinism, despite short-term fluctuations, is clearly in overall decline. What more likely to revive it than a burgeoning female chauvinism?

Impenetrable prose . . .

Charles Grant, London NW5
Have your subs not learnt the use of full stops? Sara Maitland's review of a Katherine Mansfield biography (*NS* 30 Oct) runs to less than a hundred lines. Yet it contains two sentences of eight lines, one of nine, one of ten, one of 11 and one of 12. One of the shorter sentences, a six-liner, reads as follows: 'Because this is an already contexted biography — for me, for others and, I suspect, for the biographer, who has constructed her own literary justification out of the gaps in previous biographers' efforts — she doesn't have the free-play space she might like.' What are phases like 'contexted biography' and 'free-play space' supposed to mean? It is a shame that the prose is hard to read, since it contains some stimulating ideas.

And do all *NS* readers understand the phrase 'social discourse', used by Judith Williamson in her very good review of *The Witches of Eastwick* in the same issue?

. . . and an error of fact

Judith W. Bird, Wellington, New Zealand
In her review of *Katherine Mansfield: A Secret Life*, by Claire Tomalin, Sara Maitland writes of Mansfield's 'escape from her Australian Family'. I am surprised at this error. Katherine Mansfield was a New Zealander, born in Wellington, New Zealand. Her father was Australian-born but emigrated to New Zealand while quite young and, at the age of 18, was employed at a Wellington importing firm. Katherine's mother had an Australian connection, as *her* mother was the daughter of a Sydney publican.

Suicide club

Vic Jones, Morden, Surrey
Peter Shore's suggestion that unilateralism is a policy of despair, undertaken with the forlorn hope that others may follow suit, is wrong (*NS* 13 Nov.). One leaves a suicide club for one's own benefit: if others choose to follow, that is a measure of their good judgement too. Unilateralism has merely taken Mountbatten's point that nuclear defence is a sham. If Labour told people otherwise it would be deceiving them — so long as the object of defence is to survive and not to be annihilated. Shore is merely espousing Thatcher's dinosaurian and — as usual — wrong analysis. Her claim that nuclear defence makes for international stability is on a par with her claim that a market economy makes for economic stability. Hence, the arrival of Trident will only add another layer of deception to the duping of our people. Why should Labour participate in that?

Saving David Alton from himself

Madeleine Simms, London NW11
The trouble with the slovenly use of language is that after a while it is apt to distort the user's sense of reality. This has clearly already happened to Mr David Alton who states quite seriously on the front page of the Roman Catholic newspaper *The Universe* (23 Oct.) that at 18 weeks gestation the foetus 'can recognise its mother's voice and familiar sounds'.

In an interview in that newspaper on the same date Mr Alton declares: 'Currently in our hospitals, babies of 20 weeks' gestation are being saved . . .' There is no authenticated case of any 20-week foetus surviving anywhere in the world, which is not very surprising since foetuses of this gestation have no lung function as Mr Alton well knows, as this has been the subject of much public debate.

It is on a par with Mary Kenny's statement in her recent book on abortion that abortion in Ireland 'is absolutely forbidden', when as everyone now knows the reason for there being no abortion in Eire is that all Irish women

NEW STATESMAN SUBSCRIBERS

As subscribers will be only too aware, the postal delivery service continues to deteriorate. In an effort to get to the source of the trouble, Colchester Post Office will be re-routing copies of the magazine from this week (issue dated 20 November).

It would be most helpful if all UK subscribers could closely monitor delivery times over the next few weeks and let me know if deliveries improve, worsen, or simply stay the same.

Joanne Hurst

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needing abortion come to Britain for this vital service — at the official rate of some 4,000 per year. The unofficial rate is much higher. George Orwell had a word for it!

Watney's tale's other side

Andrew Curry, Producer, Comment, *Channel 4*
Simon Watney told a good tale in his First Person column (*NS* 6 Nov.) about his encounter with the mighty monolith of Channel 4 and the *Comment* programme. If only life were so simple. For Simon chose to reveal only half the story. Yes, I was very pleased with his script, and since most of it was included in his column, *NS* readers will now know that it was good strong stuff. Unfortunately, it was also thought to be libellous. It's possible to argue about this, but libel is an inexact science: ask Esther Rantzen. Since Channel 4 happens to employ a lawyer who many people (including myself) regard as one of the best in broadcasting, one takes his advice seriously rather than risking the pot luck of the law courts, not just for the good of the Channel but also for that of the contributor.

In the event (and this is the untold part of the story) we offered Simon Watney the chance to re-record his piece, at our expense and with a further fee if necessary, with the two minor amendments we thought necessary to stay out of the courts. I don't believe they would have affected the tone of the piece, or the argument. He declined, on the commendable grounds that it was a matter of principle, adding that if the piece as recorded could not be broadcast, then so be it. I respect him for that. But somehow — maybe this is just me — it seems to be less admirable to see this minor episode rehashed, and so selectively, in the pages of the *NS* several weeks later.

Defining her terms

Ken Collins, MEP, East Kilbride
It is a pity that Jane Dibblin spoils an otherwise excellent article (*NS* 23 Oct.) by a somewhat superficial description of what she understands to be ecologists and conservationists. Ecology is a word which was introduced in the late nineteenth century to describe plant-environment and animal-environment relationships, where environment was defined in a very wide sense indeed. In that sense an ecologist need have no particular political ideology and it is a pity that 'ecologist' is now rather falsely used to mean 'environmentalist', the latter being an individual who has a particular view about the human response to and use of the rest of the earth's environment.

In particular, the article does less than justice to the conservation movement by suggesting that conservationists are interested in preserving the status quo. In fact the classical definition of conservation is that it is 'the saving of natural resources for later consumption'. Thus it is distinguished from preservation, where the aim is to fossilise existing environments. Conservation is about rational and planned use of resources, a concept which is not so far removed from some views of socialism.

'Conservation' and 'ecology' are words that have been hijacked by people who are not necessarily socialists in order to give the impression that there is an ideological respectability to views which on occasion separate the use of the natural environment from social organisation. The socialist view surely is that these two things are inextricably bound up together and that ecology and conservation are areas which are inescapably part of any attempt to produce a socialist society with its demands for individual and collective liberty and equality.

Caroline Lucas, UK Green Party Press Officer, London SW12
There is no such thing as a 'green issue' as far as the Green Party is concerned, for 'green' means a lot more than 'environmental', and implies a radical restructuring of economic and social values. And that's where many socialists misunderstand us. You cannot put the environment at the top of the political agenda without rearranging everything else on that agenda. So when a press release dropped on my desk last week hailing Labour as 'The Real Green Party' since 21 Labour MPs have formed a 'Green parliamentary group to campaign on environmental issues', their claim had a hollow ring to it, given the labour movement's continued commitment to increased economic growth.

'Greening' one thing ultimately must mean greening everything — which is why the Green Party exists as a political party concerned with all areas of policy, not as a pressure group campaigning on just one or two. And while our national election results are indeed 'a pale comparison' of those of the West German Greens, that is entirely the consequence of the thoroughly unjust electoral system in this country, which everyone who claims to care about democracy should be campaigning to change.

Doctors' anxiety about Alton's Bill

Seven doctors at Princes Park Health Centre, Liverpool 8
We are a group of doctors working in Liverpool 8, writing to express our opposition to the Bill which David Alton is introducing in the House of Commons which would lower the time limit for abortions to 18 weeks. As GPs we feel very strongly that this bill will severely affect the health of many women in the UK.

Only an extremely small number of women have abortions performed after 18 weeks, but when abortion has to be performed at this stage, it is either to prevent severe handicap or because the health consequences to the woman of continuing with the pregnancy would be severe. Women having abortions over 18 weeks fall into the following four groups:

1) Young women in particular, who initially may deny that they are pregnant because they are totally unprepared to face pregnancy or have a child. This minute number of women do need help. The way to cut down their numbers is not to compel them to go through an unwanted pregnancy, but to concentrate all our efforts on educating young people about their sexuality and contraception, and to publicise the availability of family planning and counselling agencies for young people locally.
2) Menopausal women may also present late as they may have no idea they are pregnant. These women are often over 40 and a pregnancy at this time of life could be dangerous to their health, and in addition they have a much higher risk of having a handicapped child.
3) Women who go for help early in pregnancy, but through no fault of their own are forced to wait for an abortion till a much later stage. In many Regions, including Mersey Region, if a woman does not present extremely early in pregnancy she may have to wait an excessively long time for an appointment to discuss possible abortion, and may well be beyond 12 weeks pregnant by the time she receives help. The answer to this problem lies, not in this Bill, but in a concerted effort to ensure that all Regions provide facilities to see women requesting abortion as soon as possible, so that if an abortion is performed it is done at the earliest possible date.
4) Women who seek abortion after 18 weeks are the women who are recommended, medically, to have amniocentesis, which is performed at about 16 weeks. This group includes women who are at risk of having a child with Downs Syndrome or spina bifida or who could pass on other severe congenital abnormalities. The earliest a women can receive these results is about 20 weeks pregnant. New techniques for early screening are being investigated, but these are still fairly experimental and not without risk and will never be suitable for all women. This Bill will effectively prevent screening for foetal abnormalities.

We need to work for the better provision of facilities so that as few women as possible have to have late abortions, and for better access to counselling services and family planning services for young people so that in this way the overall number of abortions can be reduced.

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CANADIAN JOURNALIST, slim, 37, 5' 10", on UK leave, seeks female companion for theatre, countryside, conversation, laughter; anywhere, especially North-West. Box no. 47/0594. W47.10

CARING, ATTRACTIVE woman with intellect and humour wishes to meet 50ish man to share chamber music, theatre, travel and good food. If this strikes a sympathetic chord please write. Box no. 47/0595. W47.11

40ish MALE, Jewish n/o enjoys outdoor/indoor pursuits, theatre, good music and lots more. Like to meet similar female with sense of humour and no hang ups for friendship. London. Box no. 47/0584. W47.12

DATELINE'S PSYCHOLOGICALLY accurate introductions lead to pleasant friendships, spontaneous affairs and firm, lasting relationships including marriage. All ages, all areas. Free details: Dateline Computer Dating, Dept. (7NS), 23 Abingdon Rd, London W8. Tel. 01-938 1011. N49.20

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the introduction agency for the 40s, 50s, & 60s

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HELP! I need cuddles and affection! I offer same in return. I am male, 26, inexperienced. I seek a fulfilling relationship with a woman. My interests include:— playing musical instruments, photography, pottery, sexual politics, making things, drawing, dancing, food and maths! I am a quiet, shy, gentle person with an adventurous non-conformist streak and a lot of potential. Take a risk on me, please! What have you got to lose. London/SE. Box no. 47/0573. W47.13

KIND, HUMOROUS, independent woman, 33, enjoys the arts, travel, going out, staying in, seeks company of man who is funny, clever and warm-hearted. Bristol/London. Box no. 47/0577. W47.14

LINGUIST/HISTORIAN (London, midfifties, marooned) interested in modern China/Middle East, socialism, seeks educated female friend (not too dissimilar interests). Box no. 47/0599. W47.15

LIVELY, MUSICIAN, attractive, early 40's seeks warm-hearted humourous, intellectual beau for romantic duo. Oxford. Box no. 47/0553. W47.16

LIVELY SINGLE woman (36, London) likes Art, talk and outings, seeks socially aware man for friendship etc. Box no. 47/0598. W47.17

MEDITERRANEAN MAN, *40, languishing in Yorkshire seeks intelligent woman to share the pleasures and warmth of sincere friendship. Photo appreciated.* Box no. 47/0582. W47.18

NORTH LONDON, 59, left wing, warm, humourous, lonely and slightly agrophobic since death of wife, needs woman, compassionate, communicative, willing to correspond before meeting. Box no. 47/0552. W47.19

PHYSICIAN, RETIRED, healthy, fit, tall, slim, seeks to meet pleasant educated lady to 55. London or rural England. Box no. 47/0589. W47.20

SOCIALIST WOMAN WANTED, possibly interested in literature, langugages, countryside, folk/orchestral music. Male writer/teacher, 55 pleasant looks, non-smoker, seeks caring relationship, hopefully including children. Photo appreciated. London area. Box no. 47/0593. W47.21

TYNESIDE, PROFESSIONAL lady, 34, tall, sense of humour, independent, likes mountains, travel, hates introspection, seeks sympathetic man. Box no. 47/0554. W47.22

VERY FEMININE ATTRACTIVE lady (45). Loves wild flowers, countryside, cultural pursuits, socialising, books, gardening, homelife, seeks gentleman for lasting relationship. Box no. 46/0525. W46.20

WOMAN, 37, single, vegetarian. Likes skiing, travel, music wants to meet caring, attractive, unattached man, similar age. Swop photos. Yorks/Lands. Box no. 47/0597. W47.23

WOMAN WANTED to share, with man, this paradise. *25 words not enough to explain; much better we* reciprocate 4/500 words or so, plus foto, to: Box no. 46/0571. W47.24

HOLIDAYS/TRAVEL

ARCHAEOLOGIST, 35, travelling to the Greek Islands for a month, commencing early May 1988, seeks female companion. Box no. 47/0581. W47.3

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PURSUITS

FEMALE LECTURER (32) wants to connect with group going on late-December walking skiing trip or people interested in planning same. Can walk. Can't yet ski. Box no. 47/0591. W47.4

PUBLICATIONS

REVIEW COPIES and other books in fine condition bought and sold by Vermillion Books, 57 Red Lion St, London WC1. Tel: 01-242 5822. N49.24

AGENDA

Deadline: 2pm Mondays FOR DETAILS CALL COLETTE O'REILLY 01-739 1645

MON 23 NOV

SETTING THE GREEN AGENDA. WALTER SCHWARTZ, Religious Affairs correspondent, The Guardian, and author of "Breaking Through". "The Wholistic World View" St James's Church, Piccadilly, 01-734 4511 at 1.05pm.

THE ISAAC DEUTSCHER MEMORIAL LECTURE ELLEN MEIKSINS WOOD will speak on "Capitalism and Human Emancipation" at 7.30pm, London School of Economics, New Theatre, Houghton Street, WC2.

WED 25 NOV

UNIVERSITY COLLEGE LONDON (Gower St, WC1E 6BT). The Daryll Forde Lecture by Professor Jan Vansina, 'The Equatorial African Rainforests: Habitat, Economy and Society', at 5.30pm, Large Physics Theatre. Admission Free. Without Ticket.

FRI 27 NOV

SHAW SOCIETY. T.F. Evans on "Shaw in the Home". Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, Holborn. Coffee 6.30pm. Meeting 7.00pm.

SAT 28 NOV

ALTERNATIVE PERCEPTIONS — POPULAR KNOWLEDGE
Logie Brown: intellectual confidence; **E P Thompson:** C18 Ranters; **P. Curry:** Astrology; **D. Vincent:** Medicine and Superstition; **B Bushway:** Superstitions and Soldiers, 1914-18. 9.45am-4.30pm, Birkbeck College, Malet Street, London WC1. Organised by Labour History Society.

IRELAND: CAUSE OF LABOUR? Conference on Employment Discrimination in N. Ireland. 10.00am-5.15pm Camden Town Hall, Bidborough Street (opposite St Pancras).

SAT 5 DEC

"ARMAMENTS AND THE THIRD WORLD CRISIS" Professions for World Disarmament and Development 4th Annual Conference: 9.45am, Royal Society of Medicine, 1 Wimpole Street, London W1. Programme: Chair, Lord Ennals; Report from New York UN Conference; The Trade in Arms; Economics of Disarmament; Resources and Programmes of Development; The Role of the Professions. Fee £8 (students £4) includes light lunch. Enquiries 01-458 5316.

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Coincides with the Hayward Gallery's exhibition devoted to this great Mexican artist.

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MEETINGS

THEOSOPHY explains reincarnation, karma, God, man and nature. Talks, informal meetings. Sun. 8pm. SAE for free literature, book list. ULT, 62 Queens Gdns, London W2. W43.6

SEMINAR

German Historical Institute, London
Tuesday 24 November, 5pm
Dr David Childs
(Nottingham)

After 42 years — How real Is the GDR?

17 Bloomsbury Square
London WC1A 2LP
01-404 5486
Tea from 4.30pm Seminar starts 5pm

MEETINGS

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Contact **Nick Butler c/o 11 Dartmouth St., London SW1 or call 01 769 4116**

PERSONAL

LITERATURE — ENGLISH/ANGLO-WELSH/ANGLO-IRISH . . . US College Library, expanding, requires collections of English Literature (20thC and older), including Anglo-Welsh/Anglo-Irish interest. Family collections much esteemed. Excellent prices given, especially for large quantities of scarce literature. Please write in 1st instance to **BOX 47/0555.** W47.5

PAUL POTTS, poet. Ring evenings 01-948 4798. W47.6

BILLBOARD

Enquiries: Laura Berryman 01-739 1645

Theatre

NATIONAL THEATRE 01-928 2252 Olivier (open stage) **PIED PIPER, ANTONY AND CLEOPATRA, SMALL FAMILY BUSINESS.** Lyttleton (proscenium stage) **WANDERING JEW, FATHERS AND SONS, WAITING FOR GODOT.** Cottesloe (small stage) **DOWN CEMETRY ROAD, ENTERTAINING STRANGERS.** See daily press for dates and times or ring recorded information 01-928 2256.

BLOOMSBURY THEATRE 01-387 0629 Nov 24-28, **SCOTLAND THE WHAT?** at 7.45pm. Tickets £7.50 (no concs).

ROYAL SHAKESPEARE COMPANY 01-638 8891. **BARBICAN THEATRE:** 20-24 Nov, 2-3 Dec, **A MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM.** 25-28 Nov, 4-5 Dec, **THE WINTER'S TALE.** 30 Nov-1 Dec, **THE BALCONY,** (last perfs). **THE PIT:** 20-24 Nov, 2-3 Dec, **THE ART OF SUCCESS** (last perfs) by **Nick Dear** (no matinee on Thursday 3). 25-28 Nov, 4-5 Dec, **OLD YEAR'S EVE** by **Peter Speyer** (27 Nov at 7.00 pm). 30 Nov-1 Dec **DEATHWATCH/THE MAIDS** by **Jean Genet. MERMAID THEATRE:** 20-28 Nov, 2-3 Dec, **THE ROVER** by **Aphra Behn.** 30 Nov-1 Dec, 4-5 Dec. **SARCOPHAGUS** by **Vladimir Gubaryev.**

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FINANCIAL

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APPOINTMENTS

idaf

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The person wanted is a qualified and very competent Typist and Word-Processor operator who is able to work under pressure and remain friendly and unflappable, with a helpful telephone manner. Some general office tasks like photocopying and collating are involved.

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Further details can be obtained by telephoning **01-359 9181 (refer "Typist/Telephonist")** or by post from the **Office Manager, IDAF, 64 Essex Road, London N1** to whom applications should be sent by **30 November 1987.**

Please apply by letter enclosing CV.

OV SELECTION have a number of vacancies for temporary & permanent office staff with typing skills. We welcome enquiries from mature people as well as College leavers. Phone Odette Veazey, OV Selection (Emp. Agy), Abford House, 15 Wilton Road, London SW1V 1LT. 01-828 8345. N49.34

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when replying
to advertisements

TRADE UNION RESEARCH

The Union of Construction Allied Trades and Technicians invites applications for the post of **Assistant Research Officer.**

The postholder will be expected to contribute to the work of a busy Research and Organisation Department as required. He or she will have a good degree in a relevant subject and an ability to produce written information quickly and concisely.

The salary will be paid at an annual rate of **£11,854.79** inclusive of allowances.

Written applications together with a full CV and names and addresses of two referees should be addressed to

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UCATT.
UCATT House,
177, Abbeville Road,
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Further details of this post can be obtained from the Personnel and Management Services Officer, Cunninghame House, Irvine, (telephone (0294) 74166, ext. 2451) with whom applications containing particulars of age, education, qualifications, present and previous posts, other relevant experience and the names of two referees should be lodged by Friday 11 December 1987.

PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS OFFICER

required by The Royal Society of Chemistry to work in the Society's Professional Affairs Department based in the West End of London.

The successful candidate will service committees concerning legal and parliamentary affairs and development of the Society's registration policy. Specific duties will include:

- **monitoring legislation and parliamentary reports for their impact on chemists and chemistry**
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The postholder will also carry out other duties in the Professional Affairs Department including:

- **writing articles and participating in the editing and production of the Society's information bulletin to Members**
- **organising symposia**
- **producing reports and articles**

Applicants should have a degree (or equivalent) or a professional qualification, and at least five years' post-graduate experience. A legal qualification would be helpful. The ability to communicate effectively in both oral and written form is essential. Experience in speaking to groups and servicing committees is desirable, as is experience of working for a professional body. The postholder must be able to meet deadlines and to work harmoniously within a small group. It will be necessary for the appointee to work in a non-smoking environment.

Starting salary within the range **£12,300 — £14,200 per annum according to age and experience on a scale rising to £16,200 (inclusive).**

For an application form and job description, telephone **Linda Davis on 01-631 1355 or write to The Royal Society of Chemistry, 30 Russell Square, London WC1B 5DT.**

Closing date for the receipt of applications is **4 December 1987.**

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BACKCHAT

INFRA DIG

Stir crazy

Diana Eden

I HAVE SPENT the past week — not for the first time nor, I think, the last — communing closely with household varnish. Let other pens than mine dwell upon flirtations with mind-expanding drugs; if you feel the need of a consciousness-raising buzz, a few days painting in a badly ventilated room, drinking deep of pungent fumes from potent polyurethane, is an experience I highly recommend.

Literally at a stroke, life, morality and woodgrain take on a different hue. Meditating in my stuffy sanctuary, among the brushes, white spirit and choking vapours that are *de rigueur* for shelf- and self-improvement in South London, I have, at intervals, examined the shrouds of newsprint that swathe the floor. And a combination of examination, inhalation and toxification has blasted the cobwebs from my wet and woolly brain and helped me to crack two of the Tories' stickier irritations — terrorism and the economy — while engaged in that most fascinating of occupations, watching the varnish dry.

First of all came self-congratulation. Beneath my feet old headlines, poignantly preserved in pools of hardening polish, itemised the horrors of The Crash. Each pained account, each anguished autopsy and dissection, served to emphasise my unsung but soaring status as City Sage. For — whether it be 1929, 1974 or 1987 — happy is the lot of those committed to the Eden-Investment-Scheme: ensure that your entire assets are permanently tied up in an overdraft and eternal peace of mind is guaranteed.

I now sit, patient and expectant, awaiting my country's call, ready and qualified as I am to lead the luckless Lawson through the mire. It has become as clear to me as — er — solvent that national solvency is all. And this is where terrorism and the economy come together: let us canter towards solvency by bringing back our old financial friend — The Rope.

I cite as a shaming — and not infrequent — example of sloppy national house-keeping the present, protracted enquiry into the Birmingham bombing case. If there is *one* thing more draining on resources than the fiscal folly of life imprisonment (at its annual cost of £13,520 per lag) it is the life imprisonment of the more-than-probably-innocent. The Birmingham six have spent 13 years inside. Even without an abacus or an uplifting whiff of varnish, it is simple enough to calculate that half a dozen hangings, a decade or so ago — followed, if needs must, by a collective, posthumous pardon — would have spared the public purse over a million quid.

Cursed, as I am, with this burden of searing vision, I scarce dare contemplate the spendthrift implications of the sentences also currently being served by those who were — equally questionably — convicted of planting the Guildford pub bomb. Yes, market forces unarguably conspire to decree that terrorists should hang. For the sake of the Exchequer, The Timothy Evans' three-tier judicial system — retribution; execution; absolution — must return. When we have re-embraced the gallows, tilted justice's scales and balanced the penal books — when, in short, we have taken the great and necessary plunge — Britain will boast a topping economy once more. Persons of the jury, I rest my polished case. □

FIRST PERSON

Pit winter

Robert Morgan

WINTER in my pit village, as I recall the season, was snowbound, icicled, skyblue and beautiful. We put on as many clothes as could be squeezed under an overcoat, tied a scarf around the neck and tried to stay upright.

There were a dozen things to do on a Saturday and I plodded the streets like an explorer, looking for someone to do them with. Several like-minded boys, bloated with clothes, found each other. Like a chain of fat dwarfs we trudged through the snow, heads down, towards somewhere. Football was out and so were all games where you had to expose your hands. We puffed and groaned from the cold but wouldn't give in, marking time on tingling feet against a wall. The dozen things to do were rapidly reduced to plain survival, but we were determined to do something.

'No, I'm not actually a candidate, I just enjoy kissing babies.'

'Let's make a fire,' suggested Clarence, blowing steam-breath over his mutton fingers and wiping his glasses. He had poor eyesight and behind his glasses his eyes were two beads.

We agreed with his suggestion, but there wasn't a match between us.

'Who can get matches?' asked Curly, a thin, catlike boy who looked like an overgrown scarecrow. He was wearing three holey pullovers and a jacket under a long Fagin overcoat too big for him even with all his underclothes. He had a man's cap on his head, resting on ears that stuck out like wedges of pink plastercine.

'I can get matches,' answered a boy like a partially inflated football. And we watched him struggling away through the snow, urging him on with shouts and threats. 'You came back mind or else you're for it!'

The boy didn't turn round but kept plodding through the snow, pushing his elbows out to go faster. We waited, blew on hands and nearly fainted.

'Let's go home,' Clarence said, 'before we die.' He was close to tears, his eyes tightly shut, thinking of a big kitchen fire.

Then Curly remembered paper and sticks for the fire, so we scattered like ducks and eventually returned with full arms. When the small boy reappeared with the matches, Curly marched towards the old bakehouse and we traipsed after him, hunched and bunched together, thinking of flames and heat.

The bakehouse was at the end of four derelict houses at the bottom of a steep hill. There were large ovens and chimneys and various holes and tunnels. We trouped in one behind the other and searched for the best place to make a fire. Curly arranged the paper and sticks on the floor in one of the large ovens. By now we were blue with cold and fighting back tears. We watched Curly light the paper and, before long, had a fire that warmed us. It roared up the chimney and we piled on sticks to keep it going.

Our hands gradually returned to their normal colour and began to ache. We groaned and shook them. Curly was the only one who didn't grumble. He sat close to the fire and got his eyebrows singed and his overcoat alight. We dabbed his face and coat with piles of snow. He rolled over, coughed a bit, then carried on warming himself.

Another boy, the only one with wellingtons, sat too close to the fire and melted them so that he couldn't remove them from his feet. He panicked and started to cry. We stuffed his wellingtons with snow which seemed to help, for he stopped crying and rattled his teeth instead.

At last the aching stopped in our hands and we wallowed in the comfort and started being civil to each other . . . until the fire began to get out of hand. As we heaped on sticks, the flames grew taller and fiercer, then smoke engulfed us so that we had to keep crawling out for air.

A boy who was keeping watch outside hurried inside. 'Watchit,' he said, his teeth chattering, 'smoke's pouring out of the chimney. Somebody'll see it sooner or later!'

'What odds?' said Curly. 'There's always smoke from chimneys around here. One more

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won't make any difference.'

'I want a warm anyway,' said the shivering boy. 'I've been out there long enough. I don't care if even the soldiers came; I want a warm.'

He almost put his hands in the fire as he warmed them.

'You keep watch,' said Curly to the boy like a partially inflated football. The boy rolled out of the oven to do his watch and we all felt safer.

When the last of the sticks was thrown on the fire we sat around and watched the embers fade. 'That was a great fire,' said Curly, adjusting his cap and feeling his eyebrows. 'We'll come here again and bring coal as well; we can all get coal. Who's for coming here again with coal?'

We all shouted, 'Me,' and crawled out of the oven like a string of fat sausages. □

FOOD

Beet that

Colin Spencer

HOW WELCOME it is that, in recent years, supermarkets have taken care to stock winter vegetables when young and small. This is vital to their taste. A large root plucked from the cold earth in late winter has had all of its sugars turned to carbohydrate, so that the flavour tends to be bland and the texture to be doughy.

With berries and nuts, roots represent some of our oldest food — and the beet family is perhaps one of the most interesting and delicious. The leaves of this family are edible, spinach being the most common example, though Swiss chard and seakale beet are just as good to eat. I grow two others in the herb garden, Orache and Good King Henry, and there is a subspecies, Beta Maritima, which grows on the seashores from here to Asia.

Red beetroots came into England in Elizabeth I's reign, where they were used for their colouring as much as for their flavour. And the main drawback with beetroot in cooking is that, although the flavour is delicious fused with other ingredients, the bleeding of the colour turns everything a messy reddish purple. If you grow the original white variety, the problem, of course, is solved but white beetroots are not available in shops.

Another sweet root with a history as old as the beet is the parsnip, which became increasingly important in the cookery of mediaeval England. It was also preserved in honey and eaten as a dessert, or used medicinally made into a cough syrup. Now parsnips are usually boiled for a few minutes and then roasted with meat or game. If slightly overcooked in a hot oven, the sugar caramelises in the fat and becomes particularly delicious.

There are other recipes which show parsnips to advantage: Jane Grigson's curried parsnip soup; glazed parsnips; parsnip and walnut fritters. All of these are extraordinarily good (for further details see *Good Things*, Penguin). The root can also be deep fried (after being boiled for 3-4 minutes), sliced in circles or into chips, then dried before being dropped into hot oil.

Carrots have been cultivated for the last 3,000 years and, like beetroot, were valued for their colour as much as for their flavour. Much of the latter is in the skin and those bright carrots in the supermarket have been cleaned under a high-pressure hose — which removes not only mud but skin and, hence, taste. It also makes the vegetables liable to rot.

Carrots are indispensible to winter stews, in which turnips are also used as a flavouring vegetable. Like parsnips, turnips need very little cooking, but must have a few minutes boiling before being used more imaginatively in a recipe.

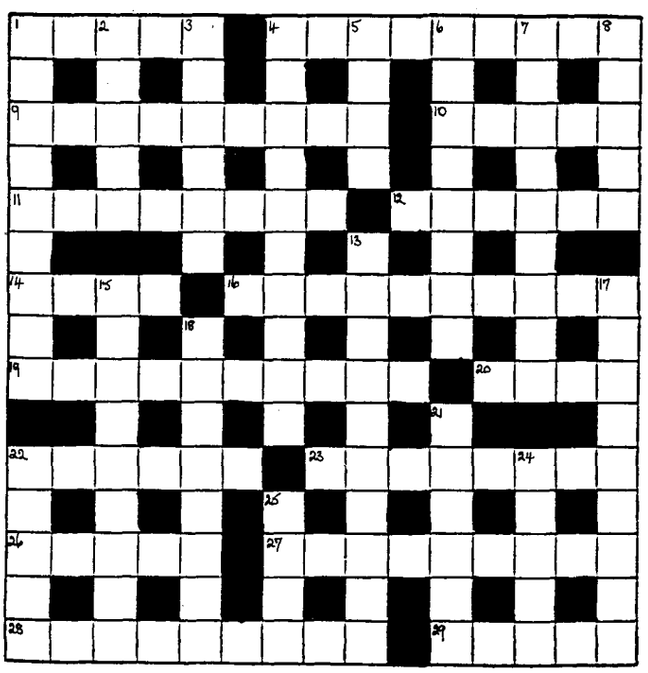
Beetroot and Ginger Winter Soup

1½ lb (675g) small beetroots, peeled and chopped
1 small cabbage, sliced
2 large onions, sliced
1 oz (25g) ginger root, peeled and grated
2½ pints (1400ml) vegetable stock
Sea salt and freshly ground black pepper

Throw all the vegetables and ginger into a large oven dish, add the stock and seasoning. Bring to the boil, then simmer for 2-3 hours, until the beetroot is tender. Or

Weekend Crossword 1578

PRIZES: £5 Book Tokens for the first three correct solutions opened. Entries to Crossword 1578, New Statesman, Foundation House, Perseverance Works, 38 Kingsland Road, London E2 8DQ, by first post 7 December.



Salamanca 6 November 'CONES' (4 letters) clues:
i) Sailors in poem, at first sign of crossbow, have regrets ii) Stiff angle shows talon once . . . iii) . . . force strikes wing: Albatross then — ? iv) Boat is one about to capsize v) Finished, being without energy: — ? vi) Height of room where one keeps books is short vii) Tin in Italian has no reality viii) Was street thief lacking outside bet to do this?

ACROSS

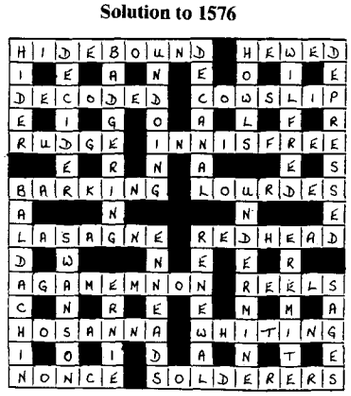
1. Bird wearing headgear? (5)
4. Badly ruins a foe, being wicked (9)
9. Although trained, the eleven recedes in confusion (9)
10. One of these vessels goes through fifty (5)
11. Figure to associate with a writer (8)
12. Ban oil refinery in Britain (6)
14. Book which is my present? (4)
16. Resentment about anxieties is kind of novel (10)
19. Something to wear just about turning into an example of skill (10)
20. Suitable for a sporting occasion (4)
22. Softly exalt and glorify (6)
23. Come together for drinks in company with the church (8)
26. God will help to keep Luton Town from relegation (5)
27. Healer has solemn expression if the singers do not come back (9)
28. Old man holds socialist to be ahead of conservative in living by plunder (9)
29. We enter a group for the course (5)

DOWN

1. Heroine caught a lion and was then torn apart (9)
2. Writer about soldiers shows what a bird does (5)
3. Trance gives me something enjoyed by the gods (6)
4. Christians who give a single reply to an old man (10)
5. Folk song depicting craze over nothing (4)
6. Weapon for maker of revolution? (8)
7. Do I squeal excitedly, coming from a harem? (9)
8. Woman who has a big country at heart (5)
13. Young women fit for a novelist (10)
15. Name of nobleman who spoils his mother? (9)
17. Leap when the trance is disturbed (9)
18. Scattering when a woman holds one poisonous creature (8)
21. Dirty water has nothing in it for boats (6)
22. Suddenly appear like a dog beside a river (3,2)
24. About time she showed awareness of guilt (5)
25. Game traveller (4)

SETSQUARE

Solution to 1576



Prizewinners to 1576

H. M. Snowden (Bradford, York.)
Tony Black (Piddington, Northants.)
E. J. Rule (London W3)

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place in a medium oven for the same time. Leave to cool, then liquidise about half of it to make a thick puree; add this to the rest of the soup. Taste and check seasoning. Reheat gently and serve with Greek yoghourt or sour cream.

Parsnip Fritters
4 medium sized parsnips
(For the batter)
1 egg, beaten
¼ pint (150ml) iced water
¼ lb (120g) plain flour, sifted
Sea salt and freshly ground black pepper

Cut the parsnips into circles about a ¼ inch thick, drop them in boiling salted water and poach them for 3 minutes. Drain with care. Mix the batter ingredients together and beat thoroughly, adding a little seasoning. Heat some oil in a pan, dip the parsnip pieces into the batter, coating completely, and fry until crisp and golden brown. Good with a mustard sauce.

Carrot and Rose Water Salad
1 lb (450g) carrots
1 teaspoon rose water
1 teaspoon whole coriander, finely ground
1 tablespoon walnut or olive oil
Sea salt and freshly ground black pepper

Trim and slice carrots into julienne strips, throw them into some boiling salted water and poach for 10 minutes. Drain well. Mix the rest of the ingredients together in a bowl and throw in the carrots while still warm. Toss thoroughly and serve.

Turnip in Lemon Sauce
1½ lb (675g) small turnips
1 tablespoon brown sugar
2 oz (50g) butter
2 teaspoons Meaux or whole mustard
2 tablespoons lemon juice
Sea salt and freshly ground black pepper

Trim and quarter the turnips, then boil them in a little salted water for 5 minutes. Drain. In a shallow oven dish melt the butter; add the sugar, mustard, lemon juice and seasoning; stir well. Then add the turnips, turning them in the sauce. Place under hot grill for a moment to brown them slightly. □

Weekend competition

No 3002 **Set by Margaret Rogers**
Laments for yuppy victims of the Crash, modelled on either Wilfred Owen's 'Anthem for Doomed Youth' or Rupert Brooke's 'The Soldier'. By Wednesday 2 December.

No 2999 **Set by Margaret Rogers**
Thrillers, in limerick form.

Report **By Nick Kimberley**
This week we are especially honoured to welcome Nick Kimberley as our guest adjudicator. Most of you will know him as our crime fiction critic; our younger, funkier, readers in the metropolis will also know him as the poetic half of City Limits' *literary section, the man whose comments on the week's 'alternative bestsellers' have earned him the title of greatest rhymester since Mallarmé. Who better, then, to pass judgment on this week's entries? Take it away Nick!*

I don't think I've heard of a dimmer trick/than reducing a thriller to limerick./Sometimes it works —/viz the undersigned jerks;/ but reading the rest was a sweat — I'm now a slimmer Nick./I do wish you'd all have a go/at something a bit tougher than Poe,/Sayers, Christie and Doyle./ It really makes my blood boil/that your brows are so relentlessly low./There were a few signs of today's papers/in your choice of criminal capers —/a dismembered Thatcher,/some jokes about *Spycatcher*/and whole platoons of nasty vicious rapers./To the victors, then, the spoils:/eight quid should cover your toils./If I were you I'd slam it/on the counter for some Chandler and Hammett/at Dillons or Waterstones or Foyles.

A girl was found dead by the altar,
En brochette with a curate named Walter,
When picked up and arraigned,
The old vicar complained,
'The fuckers had come on me psalter'.
PAMELA JANE POOH

Chandler: *The Lady in the Lake*

'Crystal wasn't' said Marlow 'the dame
With a gun, who kept changing her name;
That was Mildred, the fake,
Who was not in the lake
But was shot by a cop, an old flame.'
PETER ALEXANDER

Poe: *The Murders in the Rue Morgue*

The Rue Morgue was the scene of the slaughter
Of an elderly widow, whose daughter
Up a chimney was stuffed,
Still clutching a tuft
Of the orang-outang who had caught her.
O. BANFIELD

Christie: *Murder on the Orient Express*

Said Poirot, 'The matter is plain:
A man has been stabbed on this train,
Not once, but again
And again and again
And again and again and again.'
GAVIN J.S. ROSS

Colonel Sebastian Cutler,
Chopped by his axe-wielding butler,
Croaked in disdain
Through the blood and the pain,
'Good God man, you could have been subtler'.
PHILIP A. NICHOLSON

On a train, someone murdered Sir Hugh
Herr Klein said, 'I got on at Crewe.'
Cried Holmes, 'That's our lad —
According to Brad-
shaw the 7.43 goes straight through.'
NOEL PETTY

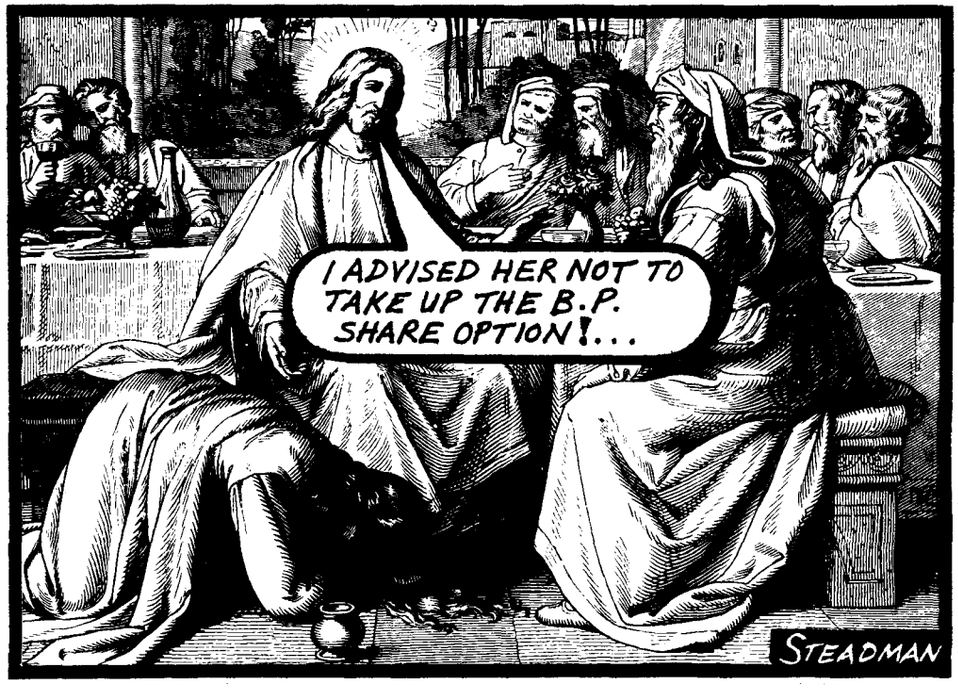
Hammett: *The Maltese Falcon*

Two gumshoes — Miles Archer, Sam Spade —
Were approached by a timorous maid.
When she proved to have wiles,
It was curtains for Miles:
He was slain by the lady Spade laid.
BASIL RANSOME-DAVIES

Poe: *Murders in the Rue Morgue*

The Rue Morgue's a good spot for stiffs,
There're so many the area whiffs.
E. A. Poe used an ape
(Highly trained to escape)
To resolve the preponderance of 'ifs'.
D. A. PRINCE

Lestrade fell silent. Holmes coughed,
And held up the poison aloft,
'It's not Moriarty
But some other party —
Good God!' he exclamed, 'It's Mycroft!'
STANLEY J. SHARPLESS



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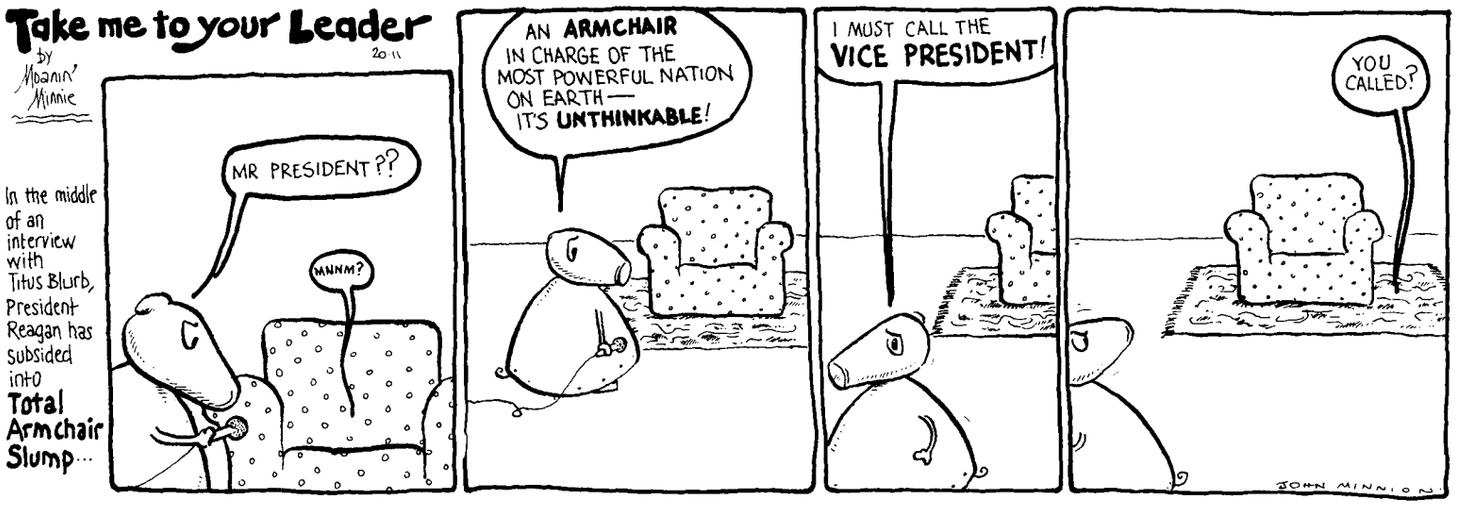
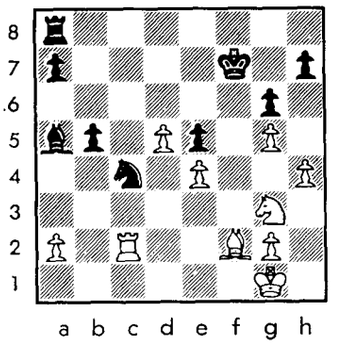

Take me to your Leader
by Moanin' Minnie
20 11
In the middle of an interview with Titus Blurb, President Reagan has subsided into Total Armchair Slump...
MR PRESIDENT??
MNNM?
AN ARMCHAIR IN CHARGE OF THE MOST POWERFUL NATION ON EARTH— IT'S UNTHINKABLE!
I MUST CALL THE VICE PRESIDENT!
YOU CALLED?
JOHN MINNION

Chess



THE DIAGRAM shows the position after Black's 28th move in the 11th game of the world championship — Karpov White, Kasparov Black. The opening had been a replay of the variation of the Grünfeld Defence previously seen in the 5th, 7th and 9th games. Curiously, practice has not improved Kasparov's handling of the defence. It would be an exaggeration to say that Karpov has a winning position, but he does have a clear advantage. White's extra pawn is not in itself very significant (the pawn at g2 hardly plays a role). But a protected passed d-pawn is always a force to be reckoned with, and here it supports a potential outpost in an open file, which is mirrored by the way the g5 pawn controls f6. In fact it is only the marvellous Knight, on shuttle between blockade at d6 and the file-plugging square c4, that is holding Black's game together.

29. Nf1 Nd6 He does not want to wait for 30. Ne3 Nd6 31. Ng4, when the White Knight is fully activated. **30. Ng3 Nc4** In effect, Kasparov is offering a draw by repetition. He has no choice in the matter, as it would obviously be fatal to allow 31. Rc6. And a fatal square that turns out to be! **31. Kf1 Ke7** Here one would expect from Karpov the unhurried Ke2-d3. It gives excellent prospects of success — e.g., 32. Ke2 Kd6 33. Kd3 Bb6 34. a4! or 33 . . . a6 34. Nf1 followed by Ne3 or Nh2-g4-f6. He is distracted from this methodical exploitation by a chance of molesting the Black King on its march towards the centre. **32. Bc5+ Kf7 33. Rf2+ Kg7 34. Rf6 Bb6!** A vital resource. White's Bishop is attacked and exchanging it is not attractive: 35. Bxb6 axb6 36. Rf2 Ra3. So how about moving it? On 35. Be7 Black can win his pawn back with 35 . . . Ne3+ 36. Ke2 Nxg2, but that would be unwise in view of 37. Rc6!. So 35 . . . Re8! is much better. White could and should content himself with 35. Bf2. Instead Karpov, naively choosing to protect the piece on c5, creates a prime exhibit for the chamber of horrors. **35. Rc6?? Na5** That's all there is to it. An elementary point: don't rely on a defender that can be attacked and driven off itself. **36. Bxb6 Nxc6 37. Bc7 Rf8+ 38. Ke2 Rf7 39. Bd6 Rd7 40. Bc5 Na5 41. Nf1 Rc7 42. Bd6 Rc2+ 43. Kd3 Rxa2** and of course you don't need to be a world champion to win such a position, the exchange up with connected passed pawns (**0-1** in 50).

That made the match score: Kasparov 6 Karpov 5. Is this the end of the road back for the ex-champion? I would reckon so. You *never* fully recover from a dreadful blunder like that. Lucky are those who have yet to realise that no one is proof against blunders and brainstorms. Nunn, for example, having lost the first game of his play-off for a place in the candidates' matches, had a very promising position in the second game. But his 27. Rxd6?? was just as crazy as Karpov's 35. Rc6??.

Nunn-Portisch, Budapest 1987. Ruy Lopez.

1. e4 e5 2. Nf3 Nc6 3. Bb5 Nf6 4. 0-0 Be7 5. Re1 d6 6. Bxc6+ bxc6 7. d4 exd4 8. Nxd4 Bd7 9. Nc3 0-0 10. b3 Re8 11. Bb2 Bf8 12. Qd3 g6 A familiar pattern in the opening: more space for White, but Black's game is resilient. **13. Rad1 Bg7 14. h3 Qb8** The main defect of Black's position ought to be the doubled c-pawns. But the pawn at d6 shields them. So Nunn prepares to eliminate it with e4-e5. **15. Nf3 Be6 16. e5! Nd5 17. Ne4 Bf5 18. c4 Nb4** Gains a tempo by harrying the Queen, but the Knight is in danger of being driven completely out of play. **19. Qd2 dxe5** Here White could play 20. a3 Na6 21. b4 with more than enough for the pawn. What Nunn plays is also strong. **20. Nxe5 Rd8** If 20 . . . Rxe5 21. Bxe5 Bxe5 22. a3 Na6 23. Qa5. **21. Qf4 Rxd1 22. Rxd1 Qe8** Simplest and best now is 23. a3! when White enjoys a big advantage after either 23 . . . Na6 (Knight off-side) or 23 . . . Bxe4 24. Qxe4 f6 25. axb4 fxe5 (horribly weak pawns at e5, c6, c7 and a7). **23. Nc5 Qe7 24. g4 Be6 25. Qd4** This threatens 26. Nxc6. If instead 25. a3 Qxc5 26. axb4 Qxb4 27. Nxc6 Qxb3 I can't see anything better for White than 28. Ne7+ Kf8 29. Bxg7+ Kxg7 30. Qd4+ when 30 . . . Kf8 31. Nc6 Kg8 32. Ne7+ draws, but 30 . . . f6 is a justified winning attempt. **Qd6 26. Qxd6** 26. Nxe6! retained White's advantage. **cxd6** Now it is not so effective to play 27. Nxe6 Bxe5, but that was still far better than . . . **27. Rxd6?? Bf8 28. Rxe6 fxe6 29. Nxe6 Bd6 30. a3 Bxe5 31. Bxe5 Nd3 32. Bd4 Nc1 33. b4 Re8 34. Nc7 Re7 35. Be3 Rxc7 36. Bxc1 Rd7** Harder for Black to win than the result of Karpov's blunder, but Portisch's technique brought in the full point.

George Botterill

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This England

£3 Book Tokens for entries printed. (Postcards please.)

☐ For the supporters of five Lewes societies it was an evening of subtle (and not so subtle) rib-digging. Part of the Cliffe's pyrotechnic display included an effigy of the Man from the Pru; he was ceremoniously burnt at the stake because, explained a spokesman, the insurance firm withdrew cover for the annual event. — *Brighton Evening Argus* (G. M. Moger)

☐ Guess what the main currency between the inmates of Ford Open Prison is these days? It's not cigarettes, and it's not hash or heroin. Ever since a new telephone box was installed there, it's . . . Phonecards. — *Daily Telegraph* (George Moor)

☐ The old-style nannies can be found. They sit by rank on benches in Kensington Gardens. A nanny from New Zealand found some there only last year and unwittingly sat next to one. 'Is your employer titled?' she was asked. 'No,' she said. 'Then you must sit on that bench,' said the superior nanny and pointed elsewhere. — *Guardian* (Steve Want)

☐ Maggie was treated like Royalty during her visit. Spanish tourist Josefa Pagarolas curtsied when the Prime Minister gave her an autograph. — *Daily Mirror* (Amanda Welles)

☐ Protests from angry children have persuaded planners to build an underpass beneath the main service road of a proposed 700-house estate at Anlaby so that frogs can cross safely. — *Daily Telegraph* (James Scott)

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